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Presidents of the United States in the century from

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THE AUTHOR.

PRESIDENTS

OF

THE UNITED STATES

IN THE CENTURY

FROM

JEFFERSON TO FILLMORE

BY
FRANCIS BELLAMY

LONDON, TORONTO, PHILADELPHIA
THE LINSCOTT PUBLISHING COMPANY
1902

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PREFACE.

The purpose of this volume is to present as much of the history of the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century as may find a proper place in the biographies of the foremost political personages of that period.

These foremost personages are the eleven presidents who served during the years from 1801 to 1853. They were in some instances the largest and most important political figures of their day, while in other instances they were men of lesser degree than other contemporary statesmen who never won the presidential prize. But notwithstanding the inconspicuous influence of several of the presidents, the history of the country is more closely related to the succession of Chief Executives than to any other generic group of men. Such presidents as Jefferson and Jackson made history, not only for their own terms of office, but for succeeding times; they were like the forces of nature and environment, they signally moulded the political life of the people and its expression in government; they were the founders and organizers of parties; they created policies; they raised issues and precipitated events; history could not escape them. Others who occupied the same chair were acted upon by history; their very inconsiderableness was not infrequently an event of political magnitude, as it marked a compromise in the struggle of great issues in the hands of great leaders,

and to regard them is to obtain a very advantageous point of view for the complicated contests which heaved them up.

The value of this biographical basis for the history of the United States extends further than political evolutions. Connected with the careers of these presidents are to be observed the movements of the social, economic, industrial and intellectual progress of the people, the enlargement and development of territory, military events and naval achievements.

Moreover, biography in presenting the individual illumines the whole period. To apprehend clearly a type of man in the Executive Office is to see in the background the unhistorical multitude who created him. The eleven presidents of these fifty years were plain men elected by plain people. They stood without a fictitious aid of birth or of hereditary rights. They came to the post and left it feeling that they were only common citizens on whom the lot had fallen. Personal ambition has thrived on American soil no less than elsewhere, but it never has vaulted beyond the patriotic principle that a democratic republic is for the good of all. Pride and pomp and circumstance cast no glamour over these careers. Their history is not a romance. The whole interest of their lives is to know what manner of men were the first political leaders of the first free people,—how sage they were, how human, how intelligent, how short-sighted and how prophetic.

To give a just significance to the characters of the presidents, from Jefferson to Fillmore, and to point the political import of events throughout their administrations, has accordingly been the dual aim of this work.

FRANCIS BELLAMY.

New York.

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PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE CENTURY.

FROM JEFFERSON TO FILLMORE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—THE BIRTH OF A NATION.

We have before us a survey of the political history of the United States, during the nineteenth century from the point of view of the presidents.

In order to understand the meaning of the American statesmanship which thus arbitrarily begins with the beginning of the century, it is necessary to review briefly the preceding political conditions. Fortunately, such a review is uncomplicated and covers but a few years. It requires, however, an understanding of certain fundamentals: what forces made the United States a nation; the political form into which the new nation shaped itself; the varied opinions of the American people towards that new political form; the social and popular conditions which made these attitudes of mind the starting points of party creeds; and finally, how at the year 1801 the party divisions seemed so clearly marked that the

organic history of modern United States politics may be said to begin.

It is idle to speculate upon the course of the thirteen Colonies in the absence of the armed collision with Great Britain called the War of the Revolution.

Whether or not the widely separated populations would eventually have grown into a single and powerful people through natural interests, the fact is that they were suddenly pulled together by the crisis of a desperate war. As English as England herself, the colonists resented with deepening exasperation the blundering commercial policy with which the British government had for the space of fifteen years oppressed them like foreign vassals. In 1760 the Americans were fighting loyally with the British to destroy the French power in the New World; in 1775 these same men were opening fire upon the royal troops. Between those dates was the succession of fatuous governmental acts which suggested to the irritated colonies the need of cooperation against the common oppressor. After blood was shed and a continental army of farmers was besieging a royal army in Boston, the Americans began to comprehend that cooperation could not go backward. During the year between the extraordinary battle of Bunker Hill, 1775, and the Declaration of Independence, 1776, the popular reasoning took far strides. Franklin's grim jest when he signed the Declaration, "If we don't hang together we must hang separately," applied in its larger sense to the Colonies themselves; for any one of them to weaken or retrace her steps now was to invite a bitterer condition than before. Thoughtful men began to see that the life of each Colony hung upon a certain common life of all, and that their first impulse to cooperation was bound to

lead them into some further combination of interests.

It is not probable, however, that the idea of a real nationality was as yet in anybody's mind. The War of the Revolution barely escaped ignominious collapse because of the very rudimentary sense of united responsibility in the new-styled States. Individual patriots were multitudinous; the soldiers fought, man for man, probably better than their invaders, and the American generalship was conspicuously superior; but the half-awakened States had such dull conception of their confederate duty that they left the patriot armies unequipped and starving. The French alliance and army helped to rescue American independence in the nick of time; but fully as momentous as the final victory at Yorktown were Washington's personal appeals to his countrymen. Year after year, during the war, he implored the political leaders of the various States to convince their people that independence required each section to sink its provincial selfishness and its mean suspicions in hearty support of the continental army and the war measures of Congress. Incredible as seems this necessity for the propaganda of a spirit of union among a people who had just declared their independence, Washington carried it on untiringly through that critical period. He was supported by others who saw no less truly how strenuous and conclusive must be the campaign of education, but his commanding position and personal weight gave to his efforts for nationality a leading influence.

When peace came in 1783, and with it the British recognition of American independence, an advance had certainly been made in the popular sense of union. But any feeling of real nationality was still

a great way in the future. The sentiment which bound the States together was still amply expressed in the Articles of Confederation.

This instrument had been adopted by the State legislatures in 1777, shortly after the Declaration of Independence. Whatever cooperation then seemed desirable was provided for in these Articles. But as the several Colonies assumed the self-reliant title of States, their chief solicitude was their own development as little republics. Their common interest in the war, they argued, was great enough not to require any compulsion from one another; and about all they wished of the Congress of the States was to act as a central committee, which should advise the State legislatures as to the needs of the hour, and should be the authority above the continental army.

Thus established in the midst of war, the Confederacy which the several young States felt obliged to enter did not pretend to be a national union. But, notwithstanding the inefficiency of the confederate government and the insufficiency of the confederate idea, it was better for the orderly growth of the future nation that this first cooperation was tentative and provisional; for the American people were thereby saved from theorising constitution-makers, and an organic government was allowed to wait until experience showed the provisions that were needed.

But this impotence of the confederacy was perilous while it lasted. Its only visible sign was a Congress. This body consisted of delegates appointed by the State legislatures, in number not more than seven and not less than two from each State. Congress voted, however, by States, each delegation having but one vote. On important measures a vote of nine out of the thirteen States was required. There

was no executive head, but administration was performed through committees.

Congress was expected to pass certain laws within a restricted field, but it had no power to execute them. Indeed, it was left powerless to perform the duties which the Articles of Confederation enjoined upon it. It could declare war but it could not enlist soldiers, nor maintain them,—the States must make the army. Congress could ordain a revenue, but it had no power to collect a penny of it,—that power was retained by the States; as a matter of fact, the calls of Congress for money had little weight with the State legislatures: once, eighteen months passed before one-fifth of the revenue demanded by Congress was raised. Congress was expected to adjudicate in disputes between the States, but was unable to enforce its decisions. Congress was the treaty-making power with foreign governments, but any of the States might violate these treaties. The whole business of regulating commerce, both domestic and foreign, was never put into the hands of Congress, but was left with each State to manage as it saw fit, with liberty to advance its own trade whenever it chose at the expense of its neighbour States; and the liberty was often taken, to the confusion and arrest of the general prosperity of the country.

In short, under the Confederation each State remained a sovereign republic, and the Congress was endowed with as little power as it was possible for a so-called governing body of representatives to possess. Congress was to act as a reminder of the necessities of cooperation—nothing further was deemed safe by the group of jealous republics. The Congress did not stand for union at all; the thirteen sovereign legislatures did not want union; nor did they desire

even to cooperate further than the immediate exigencies required.

This Confederation represented, however, with exactness the foremost political principle of the time. This was liberty. As individuals men wanted liberty. Townships and counties were self-governing communities and desired no interference in their local affairs. The newly avowed States entertained the same extreme view as to their own liberties. American politics, it must be remembered, began at the unit and worked outward. The very first political consciousness in this country was that of the individual; then that of the local government; and then that of the Colony. Within the boundaries of the Colony, decade after decade, the entire political drama known to the citizen was enacted. Other Colonies might speak the same language and have the same problems, but they were almost like foreign countries; they had originated under different conditions; they had many different traditions, principles and laws. Nearly every circumstance in the growth of the Colonies had worked to foster the individualism of each, to make each consider itself a political entity, to subordinate the feeling of inter-dependence, and to prevent wholly the sense of continental solidarity.

It is true there had been occasionally a cooperation in Indian wars, but it was only for the passing emergency. The French War was an exigency on a larger scale, and it had done more than all previous experiences together to teach the colonists the value of united continental action. It had given them possibly some sense of a common destiny for the whole North American strip of English settlements. But this sense, if it existed, was very rudimentary and

was certainly unconsidered as an impulse to be fostered for the sake of the future nationality of all.

This vast difference between cooperation and union cannot be too definitely pointed out; for herein lies the most important characteristic of the whole political history of the United States. Without a clear comprehension of that distinction the course of the history is unintelligible. From the War of Independence to the present day the growth of the sense of nationality has been anything but rapid; it has been retarded by the persistence of the sense of separate Statehood. To whatever extent the idea of mere cooperation or of mere confederation of the States has prevailed, it has been at the cost of the sense of the vital union of all the people. Yet, at the time of the War of Independence, confederation was the most radical political idea that could be offered.

But the liberty of the confederated States became a ruinous right. It was not long before the warm impulse to cooperation spent its first glowing enthusiasm; independence had been declared and each new State was conscious of its sovereignty; though a continental army was in existence, fighting its way from State to State the far-separated States grew to be more interested in their own political development than in the demands of the continental Congress for the distant army. Local and State politics were the only politics known, for congressmen were not elected by the people; Congress was but a committee appointed by the several legislatures. The newspapers were too meagre to create public sentiment; news crept laboriously and disjointedly through the vast distances; the quickest communication between the larger towns was the weekly stage, while the remoter

settlements knew of the world only by the infrequent traveller. The enemy was far away, heard of but seldom; the needs of the army were difficult for the people to comprehend; farming and shop-keeping went on as always.

Under these conditions it would have been indeed extraordinary if many men had possessed the continental breadth of view,—even if the continental organisation had been stronger than it was. But when the central organisation was only an advisory committee, it is easy to understand that General Washington's most formidable foe was continental apathy.

Washington's chief labour during the entire War of Independence was to stimulate an inter-state patriotism. The ragged, starving army, which could seldom face the enemy because of lack of ammunition, was dependent on Congress, and Congress was dependent on the several legislatures which were comprised of men whose lights were small. Consequently Washington's only resource was to address these State legislatures in person. During the long waits between battles, and scarcely less during the campaigns, the General kept up an unbroken campaign of letter-writing. Every post from the army was heavy with the letters of its chief to the men of local prominence who might influence votes in the legislatures. Aides-de-camp and orderlies were busier in carrying special letters to provincial statesmen than they were in fighting.

The burden of these letters was the need of union. Though the immediate occasion was the common defence and the making good the Declaration of Independence, yet the incessant motive was a continental patriotism. Washington was aided in these efforts

by a few other far-seeing statesmen, who perceived that union of the States could be gained only by personal appeals to leaders of local influence. Yet Washington himself, more than any other, was the man who pulled the country together. His efforts reached into every State and were paramount in implanting a sentiment of continentalism; every appeal for present cooperation in support of the army carried also the suggestion of a national life yet to come.

The war ended, however, with but little apparent progress toward nationality. The French allies departed after Cornwallis's surrender, and the American army waited nearly two years unpaid by Congress. With difficulty the army was restrained from violence against that body. The simple fact was that Congress could not get the States to send on the money. The danger being over, the State politicians relaxed more than ever into State politics and ignored Congress. Washington's sense of nationalism was never more signal than when he protected the despised Congress from his own exasperated soldiers.

The next few years were the most discreditable in American history. Congress was practically unregarded. England sent no minister. Foreign powers deferred making treaties, believing they could soon bargain better with the separate States. Many observers in Europe speculated freely as to when the American Confederacy would break in pieces, and whether the parts would not eventually fall again to England.

Disregarded abroad, Congress was despised at home. That its hands had been tied by its principals should at least have relieved it of responsibility for

its powerlessness. But this misfortune did not save it from obloquy. It must be admitted that its *personnel* was, in the main, much beneath that of the body which dared the Revolution; though it had some distinguished members, most of the ablest leaders were now preferring to engage in the political construction of the several commonwealths; and many of the members who had accepted the appointment found it more convenient to stay at home than to appear in so bankrupt a body.

There was no longer a pretence of paying the confederate debts. Millions were owed to the soldiers, to citizens, and to Europe. But the States gave not even enough to pay the interest on these debts. A mob of unpaid soldiers once routed Congress from its meeting-hall in Philadelphia. The confederate script was the most worthless paper in existence. The real money of the country was of a numerous variety and changed in value as one travelled from city to city. As if commerce had not been sufficiently ruined by the wreck of credit and by the nondescript currency, States began to erect barriers of tariff between themselves. It is difficult to imagine in an orderly land a condition of more complete commercial anarchy than prevailed when the proposal was made to call a general convention of the most eminent statesmen of the whole country to form, if possible, a scheme of government that would govern, and would command the respect of America and the world.

While the moribund Congress still continued its sessions, this Constitutional Convention, authorised by the Congress, assembled in 1787 at Philadelphia, and deliberated for four months. To say that it was composed of the ablest statesmen of the States would

be inadequate: among its members were some of the most sagacious and far-seeing men whom the country ever produced; it has often been said that the convention was altogether the most extraordinary body of political thinkers ever gathered in the history of the world. Washington was the chairman, and Franklin, Hamilton and Madison were marked leaders among a number of others scarcely less remarkable. It was a gathering, in the main, of finished scholars in political theory, yet a meeting in which advanced philosophy was ready to yield to the American consideration of what was immediately feasible. The members were practical dealers with local politics, yet they were not unwilling to sacrifice cherished local assumptions to the general end for which they had come together. For comprehensiveness of view, for sharpness of reasoning, for downrightness of adaptations, for moderateness of temper, and for determination to make a scheme that would work and would last,—the quality of this assembly is probably unmatched in the history of nations, and the product of its deliberation is the proof.

The general attitude of the men who made this great meeting was conservative. They were summoned only to bind together elementary units which were naturally falling apart. They knew the temper of their States, and how little inclined they would be to yield to the radicalism of nationality. The limitations were too inelastic for the new instrument to provide for a very strong Federal government. On the other hand, it seems clear that most of the members grew in certain convictions as the debates went on. They came to comprehend that a plan to be enduring must represent a positive idea of vital union; that a mere patching together of grudged

compromises would miss the end; and that there must be involved and implied a certain national life which the new constitutional forms could gradually develop without shock to present State insularity.

At one of the early sessions Washington remarked: "It is too probable that no plan we propose will be adopted. Perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained. If to please the people we offer what we ourselves disapprove how can we afterwards defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair: the event is in the hand of God." This utterance perhaps expresses the purpose which eventually came to rule the decisions of the convention; its members had assembled apprehensive that they might be asked to surrender too much; without abandoning their conservatism they succeeded in creating a government so strong that the most terrible civil war that ever happened could not break it in two.

A Federal union of independent States was aimed at in the Constitution; a national republic was the result. This republic was not a convulsion like the old commonwealth of Cromwell; it was not a disguised monarchy; it was not the extended dominion of some one imperial state; it was an enduring republic, based on democracy, and its imperial power was evenly shared by each constituent.

The working process by which this extraordinary Constitution was arrived at was a series of compromises. The States were on one side, the wholeness of the people was on the other. The rights of the former were recognised in a Senate which represented the individuality and equality of the respective states, without regard to size or population; the rights of the latter were met in the House of Repre-

sentatives whose members were elected directly by the people. The only prerogatives enjoyed by the Senate alone were cooperation with the Executive in making treaties, confirmation of appointments to office, and the judgment in cases of impeachment; the exclusive prerogatives of the House were the initiation of revenue bills and the originating of impeachments; on all else the powers of the two bodies were coordinate and equal. The senators, standing for permanent State interests, served six years; the representatives, standing for the opinions of the people, were elected once in two years.

Ineffectualness of administration was provided against by the creation of an Executive president, elected by the States. Clothed with certain royal powers, he was liable to impeachment for their misuse, and he laid them down after four years of office. Foreign diplomacy and treaty-making belonged to him; advice to Congress and the sanction of Congressional bills were in his duty; military command of the army and navy fell exclusively to him. On the other hand, neither he nor his cabinet had any right actually to initiate legislation, as in a ministerial government; he was appointed to be the high servant of the States and the people, not to make laws for them; he was a chief magistrate but not a ruler. Singularly, while providing against the president's hand in legislation, the Constitution unwittingly created another functionary whose single power in law-making was despotic; the speaker, who appoints all the legislative committees of the House, is thereby able to block or to promote much important legislation.

Wholly independent in action of both the other branches, though created by them, was the Judiciary.

The Supreme Court was the guardian of the Constitution, the censor of all Federal legislation, and the final bar of appeal.

The scheme thus outlined was adjusted with perhaps the most elaborate and effective system of counter-checks devised by human ingenuity. The legislative, executive, and judicial branches were balanced with precision, and were ready to arrest the first eruption on the part of either. The States retained all their powers which they did not explicitly delegate to the federal government; each remained a guaranteed republic, secure from interference. Moreover, the people as a whole gained a recognition in the very fact of the new national government; the Constitution began in their name: "We, the people of the United States, etc.;" in its first ten amendments it insured to them a broad bill of rights. Besides all this, it was so carefully worded that while the States retained in explicit form all that could be thought of at the time as properly theirs, there was such openness in the implied powers of the Federal government as to give room for the evolution of a Nation.

It was not expected that this Constitution of 1787 would be universally acceptable; but the framers, who sent their work through Congress to the States, were not prepared for the violence of the opposition. A year elapsed before the requisite nine States ratified the instrument, and the last of the thirteen did not send in its adoption until 1790. The framers had reasoned faster than the people, and although the document found at once many ardent supporters, it was bitterly opposed by a strong party who believed that it meant the subversion of State liberty and the establishment of a despotism. The battle

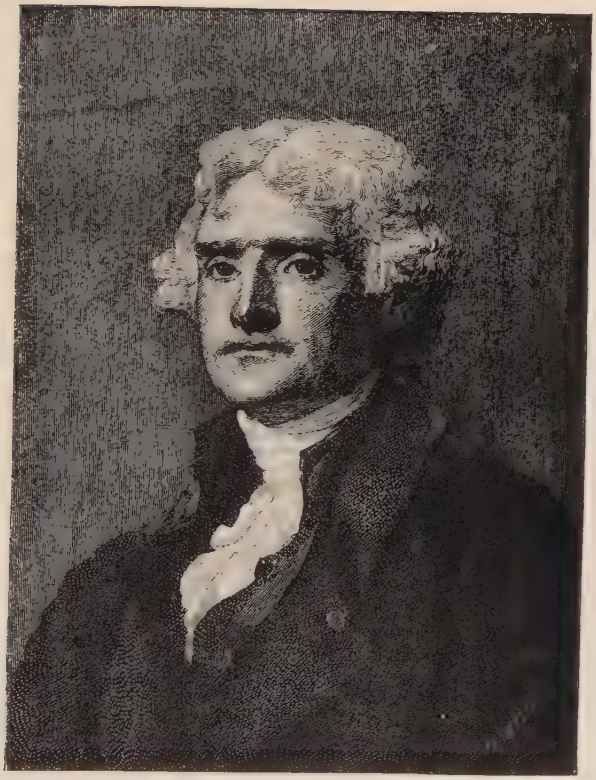
between the Federalists and the Anti-federalists was fought in every city and town and four-corners in the country. Madison, Hamilton and Jay entered the contest in defence of the Constitution and published a series of Federal tracts in exposition of the Constitution, unexcelled in political literature. The narrow margin by which the adoption was finally carried is indicated by votes in the conventions of those States where the antagonism was strongest; even with the expedient of a resolution recommending certain desirable amendments to the Constitution, it was only accepted by a vote of 31 to 29 in New York, 88 to 80 in Virginia, 187 to 160 in Massachusetts.

With the establishment of the new government under the Constitution, the divergence of parties over it did not end. During the eight years of Washington's presidency the terms of the compact were still discussed, and men still aligned themselves as Federalists and Anti-federalists. The debate had of course ceased to be over the fact of the Constitution; its establishment was conceded; but its opponents turned their fight into the strictest construction of its provisions, being fearful of the possibilities which a liberal interpretation of its powers might bring to pass. Vigorous acts of the government were designated as exaggerations of power by the Anti-federalists and defended as legitimate by the Federalists.

This alignment, however, in its nature could not last for long. During the latter half of the last decade of the century a real party was being formed under the tutelage of Thomas Jefferson. The Democratic-Republican party gathered nearly all the Anti-federalists into its ranks, and even gained some adherents from the Federalists. This party which will be

described in detail in the chapters on Jefferson, took for its creed the largest liberty of the individual, and it believed that this liberty was best guaranteed by a rigid construction of the Constitution, requiring the Federal government to relinquish to the States all the activities not expressly and unalterably delegated to it.

But the Nation had nevertheless been born and the new century was to see its growth.



THOMAS JEFFERSON.

PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON.

(TWO ADMINISTRATIONS, 1801-1809.)

CHAPTER II.

THE AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE first American president of the nineteenth century was unquestionably the most distinguished figure in the executive chair for the fifty years which this volume covers. Indeed, it may be claimed without risk of much contradiction that, next to Washington, Jefferson exerted a greater political influence than any other Chief Executive in the entire history of the Republic.

While this prestige begins with Jefferson's conspicuous service in framing the Declaration of Independence, its most substantial basis is his personal influence on national policy from his election to the present day.

Other presidents have signally embodied the spirit of their party, and, as accepted leaders, have given to its policy a further shape. But no other president began with no party, conceived a party which should embody his own views, created that party, received presidential election from that party, and then gave to it such impetus and life that after a

hundred years, in spite of seemingly ruinous blunders and disruptions, it remains indestructibly one of the great factors of the nation. No other president is to-day so much quoted by men of all parties, and is appealed to with such unanimity. Implicitly followed by a half of the citizens of the Republic, who claim their party descent direct from him, he is scarcely less venerated by the other half, who are in the opposing ranks.

This is the singular distinction of the President whose administration begins the century. It is a distinction, however, which has a subtle basis in the character of the man. Many of the presidents have lives of famous interest, and yet their peculiar personalities gave but faint colour to their presidential influence. Jefferson's marvelous and increasing influence, on the contrary, was the direct result of his mental attitude. His political career was inseparable from his inner life. The principles which he gave to his party and embedded deep in the foundations of the American system were the consequence of his personal philosophy. They were the effect of a natural selection among a curious mass of visions, both sane and fantastic, to which in their time he gave equal interest. It was also largely this remarkable union of the qualities of both the visionary and the politician which endeared him to the people as a sage who performed brilliant strokes, and as a statesman who dreamed dreams. Jeffersonianism is thus an authentic existence, and its far reach can be understood only through a correct apprehension of the man himself. Consequently, peculiar interest attaches to the formative period of his life.

Jefferson was a democrat by birth. His lineage was plain on his father's side, though of accepted

degree through his mother's family. Of her descent he remarked somewhat flippantly that her family "traced their pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let every one ascribe the faith and merit he chooses." But he preferred to regard his yeoman father's blood as determinative in giving him his impulse for the people and creating his warm sympathies. The names of his parents were Peter Jefferson and Jane Randolph, and he was born at Shadwell, Virginia, April 13, 1743, eleven years after the birth of Washington.

It was into an aristocratic Colony that the democratic child was born. Virginia plumed herself upon her social superiority among the thirteen American Colonies, and her pretensions were supported both by her institutions and by her gentry. She had not only the Established Church, but also laws of primogeniture and entail. She had received shiploads of cavaliers when Charles I. fell; and these royal adherents set up manorial customs and class barriers in the new country. Their families spread through the Colony, gave their colour to its social life, and easily dominated its politics.

This modified, untitled aristocracy existed comfortably in the Colonial days, along with that other English inheritance, a desire for representative government. Indeed, Virginia gave to America, in 1619, twelve years after her first settlement by Captain John Smith and his "gentlemen adventurers," the first Colonial legislature. In the Massachusetts Colony representative government came through the extremely democratic "town meeting," where every citizen trained himself in local government. In Virginia the same end was sought through the less democratic county system. But naturally,

while the Massachusetts plan gave popular representation, the Virginia delegates stood first for their classes of gentry and well-to-do farmers, and only distantly for the large servile population, white and black.

In this community the Jeffersons were not at disadvantage, although lacking the first position of social rank and wealth. They were plain, early settlers, the first American Jefferson having landed in Virginia before the Pilgrims came to Plymouth. Peter Jefferson, the father of Thomas, was, however, a vigorous, ambitious son of the New World, and he knew the stepping stones to family distinction. He became a friend of William Randolph, "patented" a large plantation near his seat, and by eventually marrying Jane Randolph allied himself with a family of degree.

Thus Thomas was born into some fortune and into assured family connection. While young he came into his fortune by the early death of his father.

A tall and sinewy youth, with reddish hair and eyes of mixed colour, Jefferson was not handsome, though he is said to have become "a very good-looking middle-aged man and quite a handsome old man." He was an athlete of that day, and besides the necessary skill in horsemanship, he was a dead shot and a performer on the violin.

At the age of seventeen he entered William and Mary College. According to his own account, he was a tremendous worker. With some allowance for retrospect, this may be accepted as true, for he loved information, and he later gave evidence of a broad education. He liked especially mathematics and physics, but he could not tolerate metaphysics or ethics as subjects of science.

At Williamsburg, the seat both of learning and of colonial government in Virginia, Jefferson began to read law in the office of George Wythe, a gentleman of wide distinction. Here was soon formed a *partie carrée*, as Jefferson calls it in his memoirs, the social and intellectual brilliancy of the other members of which gives us an idea of the young student's maturity; his companions were Mr. Wythe, Professor Small of the college, a gifted teacher, and Fanquier, the Governor of the colony. They habitually dined together at the "palace."

In this society, which was the opposite of strait-laced, young Jefferson appears to have kept his head, and to have got from it only the incitement of distinguished companionship.

In love, during these years, Jefferson must have had his tilts, to judge from some letters of his to a friend; but these experiences were only half-hearted, until his affections were at length centred upon a young widow, Mrs. Bathurst Skelton, whom he married January 1, 1772. By this marriage he not only gained an accomplished partner, but added handsomely to his patrimony.

Jefferson was at this time very energetic and successful in increasing the fortune in land and slaves which his father had left to him. His acres now numbered five thousand, and he owned fifty-two slaves. His law practice and his farms gave him an income of more than five thousand dollars a year, which at that day was an ample living for a country squire.

The time which he gave to the practice of law was in length but a bare start in the professional life; yet when he closed this period of his career in 1774, he had established himself as a successful practi-

tioner, more especially as an office lawyer than as an advocate.

But, while his profession was the law, and while the great labour of his life was given to national politics, his beloved calling, early and late, was farming. In the first volume of his Works he enumerates what he has been able to accomplish for his country. Side by side with such notable services as the disestablishment of the State Church in Virginia, the abolition of entails, the prohibition of the importation of slaves, and the drafting of the Declaration of Independence, he enumerates the importation of olive plants and of heavy upland rice to take the place of the pestilential wet rice. "The greatest service which can be rendered to any country is to add a useful plant to its culture" is his own estimate of public service.

He loved the soil, and its tillers he called the chosen people of God, the healthy part of the body politic. The importation of artificers and mechanics he deplored as unwholesome. Yellow fever was the welcome pestilence which would destroy that greater pestilence,—the growth of great cities. "I should wish," he writes, "the States to practice neither commerce nor navigation, but to stand with respect to Europe precisely on the footing of China." These extraordinary fancies bear the mark of genuine enthusiasm in agriculture, and naturally knitted to him the great constituency of pioneer planters and farmers. His dreams, both in farming and in politics, were utilitarian. He wished to benefit mankind in practical things, though not seldom his plans involved impractical means.

The year 1765 was a stirring one for the Colonies; it was the date of the Stamp Act. This Act was

Parliament's way of making the Colonies pay the bill of the long French and Indian War, which ended in 1763. The resistance to this excise was instant and intense. In the Virginia House of Burgesses, Patrick Henry, then a young lawyer, made his celebrated speech against taxation without representation. Young Jefferson heard his eloquent friend, and thought he spoke "as Homer wrote." But he needed no firing from another's lips, for radicalism and democracy were of his fibre.

It was not long before his own participation in politics began, for in 1769 he took his seat in the newly elected House of dissatisfied Burgesses. Here he at once took place as a bold young leader, who thought the older members not "up to the point of forwardness and zeal which the times require." His peculiar talent as a drafter of resolutions soon became manifest; they proved so disloyal that the royal governor dissolved the House as often as it met to pass them.

News of the Boston Port Bill, in 1774, evoked in Virginia the spirit of a common cause, and the feeling that the Colony must take a bold and determined stand at the side of Massachusetts.

Previous to these tidings from the North, the young blood in the Virginia House had devised a far-reaching scheme for Colonial correspondence; the plan was that each Colony appoint a standing committee for communication with the other Colonies. A little coterie of advanced patriots among the Virginia Burgesses constituted itself such a committee and issued a circular of invitation to the representative bodies of the other Colonies.

Stirred to bolder action by the affairs at Boston, the Burgesses, who happened to be in one of their

dissolved states, reassembled and passed two important resolutions. One was a call for a special convention of Virginia representatives, independent of the royal governor; the other directed the self-appointed committee of correspondence to advise with the standing committee of the other Colonies as to a General Congress to meet annually in the interests of all.

Thus, from a small band of audacious, Southern radicals, there began to extend those widening circles of sympathy and a sense of common grievance which were soon to embrace the thirteen Colonies.

Jefferson sent a draft of instructions to his own convention, which he hoped would be adopted by that body and given by its delegates to the Congress of all the Colonies. It was a revolutionary manifesto, which anticipated by two years the Declaration of Independence. It was so bold and uncompromising that the more reluctant patriots who wanted redress rather than revolution chose to express themselves in a milder tone. But it was printed, under the title, "A Summary View of the Rights of British America," and was widely circulated in England where it stirred a considerable tempest, and might have cost the hot revolutionist his head had he been less inconveniently out of reach.

Jefferson was elected deputy to the Colonial Congress in 1775. When he set out to join that distinguished body of men, he took with him another notable contribution to Colonial papers,—his reply of the Burgesses to Lord North's "conciliatory proposition," which had just been accepted by them.

The Continental Congress which assembled in May, 1775, had gathered for its remarkable work the strength of the Colonies. Threescore picked

men, each of whom had impressed himself upon his own Colony as a sagacious leader, made up that extraordinary company of statesmen whom Lord Chatham characterised as having never been surpassed in "solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion." And they were now to discover their own leaders.

Dr. Franklin, already past seventy and known in Europe, was the most conspicuous. Colonel George Washington was the most experienced soldier on the continent, and enjoyed the advantage among his fellow-members, as he did through his whole life, of readily and adequately impressing men with his superlative good sense. Samuel Adams, "a statesman incorruptible and fearless," as the legend runs on his monument, had been the organiser of the revolt in Massachusetts, and was known throughout the Colonies. His cousin, John Adams, afterwards to be the second President of the Republic, was a man of large mould and a great debater. John Jay, the youngest member, was afterwards to negotiate the famous treaty between the young Republic and Great Britain.

Yet among them all the man who had the most unerring idea of what the Congress was for and whither it was leading, who best interpreted the wishes of the people and anticipated their coming demands, and who alone could throw it all into convincing, resistless formulæ, was Thomas Jefferson.

It must be remembered of this, as of every other historic struggle, that while men's ideas hasten on events, events in turn carry forward popular ideas, sometimes with fearful rapidity. The bloodshed at Lexington and Concord in April of 1775, and the battle at Bunker Hill in June, now turned the tide

which was to sweep away reluctance and conciliatory sentiments forever. Action begot action. Because Massachusetts was being coerced, Congress had to call the frontiersmen of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia from their hunting and farming, to march to the help of the merchants and fishermen of the coast.

Thus, exigency called into existence an American army before independence was even a formulated desire; and around this army the new patriotism gathered itself.

These men of the West had not to be called to arms, for they were bred to Indian warfare, which meant instant, unremitting readiness; moreover, they were expert riflemen, when rifles were still new to Central Europe and were not yet in use in the British army.

Colonel Washington was appointed commander-in-chief of the gathering forces, and assumed the command at Cambridge in July, 1775, with a prophetic sense of the importance and dignity of the act.

Notwithstanding all this, just after the battle of Bunker Hill, Jefferson wrote these formally pacific words: "We mean not to dissolve that union which has so long and so happily subsisted between us, and which we sincerely wish to see restored. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure." To John Randolph he wrote, in this same summer of 1775, that he was sincerely one of those who still wished for a reunion with their parent country. "But," he continued, "I am one of those too, who, rather than submit to the rights of legislating for us assumed by the British Parliament . . . . would lend my hand to sink the whole island in the ocean."

These expressions suggest how the people of the

Colonies, and their leaders, were tossed in their minds by the various interests which confronted them; some considerations belonged wholly to their own new world, and as many more bound them to the richer life of old England. The trend of America's development could have been but dimly traceable. Alternations of faith and despair made dark days for the timid, which were the beginning of many years of uncertainty and confusion. No one judging the Anglo-Saxon dispassionately would assert that anything less deep than self-interest was at the bottom of the revolt; yet a self-interest so serious and high-minded as to act like national genius.

Once more, representatives from the thirteen Colonies met in Congress in May, 1776, and their temper was unmistakably bolder. It was now the boldness born of having cut off retreat. To the luring destiny of independence they were also further impelled by the feeling that nothing but individual destruction would attend a backward course. Virginia was again a leader, having instructed her delegates to move that Congress should declare "the united Colonies, free and independent States."

This motion Richard Henry Lee offered on June 7. Congress then appointed a committee, and charged it to draft a Declaration of Independence. Its members were: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston. That Jefferson was given the first place in the work of preparing the proper expression of such a momentous declaration shows both his fitness and his popularity. There were factions in that Congress, and to be unobjectionable to all the jarring elements was as great a distinction as the special aptitude which Jefferson assuredly possessed.

The task must have been left wholly to the Virginian member of the committee, for the original draft is in his handwriting, and the few corrections made by Dr. Franklin and John Adams are verbal.

Lee's resolution was adopted July 1 by seven Colonies, later by all; and Jefferson's draft of the Declaration was ready to present to the House the next day. In the discussion following, which lasted until the afternoon of July Fourth, John Adams was its most powerful advocate. Jefferson had a weak voice and no liking for warm debate. Throughout his public life he worked great party combinations by his powerful use of the pen and by subtle personal influence. On the floor his friends had always to act for him.

The discussion over the Declaration resulted in some unimportant alterations and a few valuable changes. George III. was not held responsible for the slave-trade, and everything which appeared to reflect upon the English people was carefully excluded. Thus tempered, the document was signed by each of the revolutionists, amid pleasantries of humour into which, by a characteristic American impulse they dropped as a relief from the dramatic solemnity of the occasion. But neither they, nor the waiting, jubilant people outside, failed to comprehend the epoch-making significance of this act. Post-haste the tidings were carried to the army and to the remotest settlements that the thirteen Colonies were now independent States—each as much a political entity as England herself. There were probably but few who comprehended that a great Nation was born; the joy was that thirteen new nationalities had come into being, while their combination of action

was regarded as an expediency for the good strength of each.

The best claim for this celebrated paper is that it is an adequate expression of the principles on which the American people entered the fight for independent political life. It contained nothing original, and it generalised broadly; but, for just those reasons, it declared the dissatisfied people to themselves and showed them that their sentiments were based on axiomatic truths. Jefferson commented fairly on his own production: "I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether, nor to offer any sentiment which had never been expressed before."

Jefferson left Congress in 1776, declining to serve by a reëlection. He did not sit again with that body until 1783, seven years later. Then, the struggle over, he had the pleasure of signing the treaty of peace which established the Independence which his declaration of 1776 had asserted.

His own House of Burgesses, now standing for a State, offered a more definite and attractive work. The change from a colonial, semi-dependent system of government to that of an independent State had to be effected, and Jefferson determined that this transition period was the time to strike at the aristocratic institutions which obstructed democracy. It would appear a hard undertaking in tidewater Virginia,—English, Episcopal, cavalier and aristocratic in its extraction. But other pioneers had entered the province and settled the Shenandoah Valley in 1730—the Scotch-Irish—bringing with them Scotch Presbyterianism and a sturdy democracy, which frontier life had further encouraged. These men became the small farmers, sent representatives

to the House of Burgesses, and were a stubborn set of democrats opposing the oligarchy of the old Colony.

These recruits from the mountains belonged to Jefferson's natural constituency. He was never a radical in the sense of stirring new passions in the multitude and so creating a following. Rather, by silent sympathy, he went all the way to meet those popular feelings which were already stirring in the hearts of men who held social equality and individual freedom to be a birthright.

There were other leading spirits, among the best class of citizens, who believed that old Virginia should now be regenerated in harmony with the new American ideas, and were ready to help legislate with Jefferson. For this was the State that gave, besides Jefferson, three other great constructive Americans of the times,—Washington, Madison, and Marshall; and though they did not all build alike, they stood equally for an era of new ideas.

Notwithstanding such reasonable explanation, it is still remarkable that so many reforms were made in that very English community within a few years. The whole social and economic code was affected by the successive bills which Jefferson brought into the legislature. One of these bills established courts of justice throughout the new State. The next was of greater audacity. It aimed at the destruction of a landed aristocracy, which was protected against its own extravagance and debts by the law of entail. By one stroke the bill did away with inalienability of property in America. The next bill sought to abolish the law of primogeniture, and thus to gain another leveling principle,—the equal distribution of wealth among heirs. These laws were actually

passed in a House where many of the delegates were the very favorites of birth and fortune whose benefits were being snatched.

It would seem that delegates willing to vote away their own privileges of property would not hesitate to disestablish the State Church; but in this effort Jefferson was not immediately successful, although the State's support was withdrawn from the Anglican church a few years later.

Up to this time none of the Colonies had thought it necessary to have a central seat of government. The utilitarian Jefferson, however, laid down the obvious proposition that it was sensible for a State to locate its capital at something like a geographical center. This Virginia legislature thereupon chose Richmond as a convenient capital, and in so doing set a custom which nearly all the other States subsequently followed.

Jefferson had a clear vision of the needs of education for a free state, and he obtained the passage of a fairly comprehensive bill for public schools; but this proved too far in advance of the controlling Virginia sentiment, and it became inoperative.

The old code of punishment for crimes had been primitive in its severity and irregularity; Jefferson secured a law which introduced both moderation and system in the penalties for crime. Most characteristic of the man, however, in its democracy, was the bill he obtained for the prompt naturalisation of foreigners; it was unlimited in its offer of citizenship; here was the speculative statesman taking counsel only of his human sympathies, for he opened the door instantly to every comer, without question as to his fitness.

Some of these changes were effected less easily

than others, but all were enacted before 1787. By that time the statute book of Virginia had received a new character. It was the impress of the theorizer, Jefferson. His downright ideas of the Rights of Man, which he shared with the contemporary French revolutionists, and which stirred in his mind as he drafted the Declaration of Independence, now had their first chance to be put in practice; he made them so convincing that the most aristocratic of the American commonwealths became the most democratic in some of its new principles.

Jefferson also began to agitate the question of slavery. To him it was already a living issue. What he actually accomplished was the passage of a State bill stopping the importation of African slaves; what he aimed at was nothing short of their emancipation. The doctrine he advanced in 1784 was that upon which Abraham Lincoln was elected in 1860,—the prohibition of slavery in national territory. But the humanitarian impulse which moved this early anti-slavery party in Virginia was later entirely crushed by the increasing demand for slave labour in the rice swamps and cotton fields of the extreme South; and Virginia became the breeding State when the African trade was eventually prohibited by the nation. Jefferson had an elaborate scheme for the deportation of the slaves, but it was regarded as too expensive to be practicable. Yet to him deportation was the only solution, for he believed that the white and black races could not live together free and equal. That he had faith in the final triumph of the principle of human freedom is confirmed by what he wrote in 1821 in his autobiography, concerning the "infernal traffic," as George Mason had denounced the slave trade. He prophesied: "Noth-

ing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free."

Jefferson was elected Governor of Virginia in 1779, succeeding Patrick Henry. It was in the most trying period of the War of Independence, when Virginia was sorely harried by British raids and Tory uprisings. The time demanded a war-governor who had the decision and action of a general. During the frequent alarms, Jefferson proved that he lacked the qualities of preparedness and of command which the State then needed at its head. While the British were carrying the war through the Carolinas, Virginia had aided her neighbors almost to self-robbery, so that when the invaders began to turn northward, she was sadly short both of men and muskets.

Yet Jefferson was a tardy, deficient commander of the militiamen who were available. The enemy entered Hampton Roads and landed. A little later the traitor Arnold, commanding an expedition, sailed up the James River and found Richmond deserted. He burned it without hindrance from the excited governor, who was in the saddle, ineffectually scouring the country.

In the spring of 1781, Cornwallis led the British on a devastating march into Virginia. The legislature was again ignominiously scattered and the country overrun. With other planters, Jefferson lost crops, stock and slaves. But deeper than losses and terrible anxiety was the cut he received when he was censured by members of his own legislature for inefficiency as a war-governor. He went out of office sore, and feeling disgusted with public service. He demanded an investigation. But by that time Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown had so changed the temper of the people that adverse criticism was sup-

pressed; and his friends applied the balm of complimenting his administration as "impartial, upright and attentive," in a set of resolutions which the House passed. Washington was kind, too, but nevertheless the philosopher went back to his mountain home at Monticello in a bitter mood.

Domestic affliction followed close upon Jefferson's retirement. His devotion to an invalid wife, his intense grief at her death, and his life-long devotion to her memory, reveals an affectionateness of nature, warm and simple. The young widower, of less than forty, added to his own family of six children that of his brother-in-law, and then devoted himself to the care and education of the two broods with equal tenderness.

Jefferson's well-known volume, "Notes on Virginia," was written at about this season. As a conscientious study in sociology at first hand, it gives him eminent rank among the few American men of letters who were reared before the Revolution. The scholarly instincts and habits which many of the settlers of the seventeenth century had brought from England had suffered a break during the eighteenth century—so barbarising was the effect of the wilderness and its isolation. Consequently, the intellectual impulse of Jefferson, unaided by any literary atmosphere of his time, marks the original quality of the man.

A reëlection to Congress, in 1783, drew Jefferson from his retirement. The War of Independence was then just ended, and he reached Congress in time to sign the treaty of peace, in which England acknowledged the United States as independent.

One of the most important questions on the hands of this transitional Congress was that of creating a

Federal money. It was a more bewildering and unillumined task than the creation of a general government.

At this time there was no national system of coinage, no mint, no national treasury, and no banks but the old stockings of the people, filled with coins which bore the stamp of many foreign mints. These coins had, of course, various names and expressed different values in different places. Moreover, various States had different systems of calculating values. The Spanish dollar was the most universal coin; but in one State it was considered to be composed of five shillings, in another of six, in others of seven shillings sixpence, eight shillings, and even thirty-two shillings sixpence. Again, the custom of clipping coins was so extended that some payments had to be made by weight. The need for a single national unit of value was absolutely and instantly imperative. Gouverneur Morris, assistant to Robert Morris, the Superintendent of Finances since the war, had devised the first coinage plan. He proposed new, intelligible pieces of money, the last unit of which should be very small, with the increase in decimal ratio. Taking the Spanish dollar as the most available standard, he proposed its 1-1440 part as the unit which agreed, without a fraction, with the dollar and shilling values of the various states.

When the money question was again taken up, in 1783, Jefferson was the man to report for his committee. He accepted the suggestion of the Spanish dollar as the unit, and the decimal subdivisions; but he disagreed with the financier as to the awkward, infinitesimal subdivision. He subdivided the dollar into only a hundred parts. This simple plan was antagonized by Morris, as the man of affairs, attentive

to actual conditions, always opposes the plan of a theorist. Morris's practical arguments, based on the immediate confusion which would ensue among the people upon the adoption of an unfamiliar standard, were sound. But the man of theory urged that in the end the simpler and more rational plan would have overwhelming advantages.

At last, in 1785, the dollar was adopted as the unit, with the subdivisions which Jefferson proposed. Thus, Morris's scheme, as simplified by Jefferson's amendment, became the general plan for the present national coinage, with some changes made later by Alexander Hamilton.

Virginia now set a noble example to all her neighbours by ceding to Congress her claims to rich possessions in the Northwest. Jefferson tendered the deed which made this vast addition to national domain; out of the territory thus ceded have been cut the States of Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as a part of Ohio, of Indiana, and of Illinois. To Jefferson was assigned the work of submitting a plan for the government of this garden of the West, towards which a steady stream of immigration had already set. His plan formed the substance of the noted Ordinance of the Northwestern Territory. He attempted then to include in it a clause providing "that after the year 1800 of the Christian era there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said States."

This year in Congress closed Jefferson's legislative work, and he was not sorry to quit the rudely organized body. The ineffectualness of a union bound only by the loose Articles of Confederation was never more apparent or hopeless than at this time. Patriotism seemed to have gone back into

loyalty to a little patch of ground called a State. The majority of the true State patriots were still children as to national life; and while they feared the Confederation of States as a bogey, they both despised and ignored its Congress.

From discouragements at home Jefferson was invited to turn to the broader but fully as baffling questions which concerned the feeble national existence abroad. He was sent to Paris in the summer of 1784 to help Dr. Franklin and John Adams obtain decently advantageous treaties of commerce with foreign powers. While this was certain to prove as thankless a service as being a congressman at home, it was not without allurements to a man so keen as Jefferson to feel the throbbing of human life.

His first impressions of Paris, as given in his letters, are both strong and provincial. Upon French society he looked with general disfavour, being savage enough, as he wrote, to prefer the woods and independence of Monticello to the brilliancy of the gay capital. Yet he enjoyed enviously the architecture, sculpture, painting and music of the French, and admired discriminatingly their union of taste with temperance. The deplorable state of the people appealed to him painfully. He quoted Voltaire's epigram that in Paris every man must be either the hammer or the anvil. This land of contrasts suggested to his free-thinking mind a picture of that world into which we are told we shall eventually pass, and where it is declared we shall see God and his angels in splendour and crowds of the damned under their feet; he saw that ignorance had damned the common people.

Commercial negotiations were discouragingly difficult. France had dropped the States, save for polite

civilities; England was distinctly hostile, and set out to vex the late rebels by violating the treaty recently concluded. John Adams, by immense efforts, had been able to secure a fair business recognition from Holland, and treaty relations had also been established with Sweden. Old Frederick of Prussia was considering whether the good will of the young Republic was worth having or not.

At this point Adams was sent as the first American Minister to England,—a post which he had foretold would be a thicket of briars to tear the flesh of the occupant before he could escape. Franklin had leave to go home after six years in the French capital, and Jefferson became the Minister to the Court of Versailles. It is not easy to imagine the democratic provincial fitting into the large place which Franklin, the universal genius, had so conspicuously filled in the scientific and fashionable circles during these final years of the old régime.

But Jefferson found the times and the temper of the moderate, speculative republicans, with whom he fraternised, most congenial. The on-coming struggle between the people and the throne fascinated him. Ideas which he felt the conservative colonists had not embraced in their fulness were then daringly discussed by kindred spirits, and, withal, by reasonable men like his friend Lafayette. He was consulted by these men, and was intensely interested in every move made in the game they were playing against royal despotism. Yet, untrained in diplomacy as he was, and moved only by a natural and sensitive honesty, he preserved a diplomatic correctness which was cordially recognised by the royal cabinet.

When Jefferson went to Paris, Louis XVI. was

still a potent monarch. When he came home, five years later, the Bastille had fallen, the king was in the power of his enemies, and some of the royal officials had been executed. He did not stay long enough to witness the arrest of the king by the mob. But neither the news of the regicide nor the details of the Reign of Terror, as he heard them, were enough to make him waver in his allegiance to extreme democratic principles. He deplored the drunken carnage like any rational humanitarian. Yet the excesses of the French Revolution never turned him against the revolutionists, as was the case with so many friends of liberty who applauded at first but revolted wholly afterwards.

Jefferson was too deep a theorist not to behold all current phenomena in perspective; to him the crazed mob and the universal espionage in France were but wild, blind sweeps of a long outraged humanity; the horror of them was no argument against the principle of liberty; it was because normal liberty had been violated time out of mind that the present insanity was possible. Moreover, Jefferson had some extraordinary and hazy notions about blood as the "natural manure of the tree of liberty," which he had expressed in letters a few years before, anent Shay's Rebellion in the State of Massachusetts; arguing gravely that armed mobs meeting against authority were, to a certain degree, salutary for a state. With such an amiable temper towards popular outbursts, nothing that happened in France during these years made him question his own early premise that that government was best which governed least.

Jefferson returned to the United States in 1789. He had been deeply happy in Paris, and he had been equally miserable during a short trip to London,

where the attitude of the British towards the American representatives had been ungracious, evasive and insolent, and in such contrast with the consideration given them in France as men of ideas and friends of progress. He wrote: "England's hatred is deep-rooted, and nothing is wanting with her but power to wipe us and the land we live in out of existence . . . They are more bitterly hostile to us than at any period of the late war. . . . I considered the British as our natural enemies, and as the only nation on earth that wished us ill from the bottom of their souls." The impressions he received, during this unfortunate visit, of British malignity and of British inaptitude to appreciate values in America, affected his entire subsequent life.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

When Jefferson reached his plantation in time for Christmas, in 1789, a new epoch opened for him. He had expected to return to his interesting post in France, but instead he was called by Washington to take a place in the new government which, under the new Constitution, was just then being established. It was twelve years before his own first administration was to begin. But those years were to be the constructive period of the government of the United States,—the period when its most fundamental problems were to be met and its politics were to be formed. In this, Jefferson was himself to be a conspicuous factor. The applications of his pronounced views to the basic questions of that period were to become the rallying points of a great party. And though in most of the important issues at stake, Jefferson was on the defeated side, he became with failure more knowing of the essentials of sound democratic policy; and when the day of his larger power arrived, he was fortunate in what he had thrown away.

While Jefferson had been long separated from first-hand acquaintance with home affairs, his talent for sympathetic letter-writing had kept him in vital touch with the leaders of thought in the States. He had realised that changes must result from the chaos which he had left behind, but he had not anticipated

anything so grave as a fundamentally new government.

If the Constitution, which emerged full-made when the closed door of the Philadelphia Convention at last opened, was a surprise to the expectant public, it was much more startling to the absent optimist who had reasoned that experience and a few obvious repairs would make the ramshackle Confederacy a comfortably jogging machine. When he first saw the document, which was later to become a shibboleth to him at convenience, he expressed a very uncertain attitude. He was too broad to fail in recognising its wise provisions. He favoured the separation of the executive and judiciary from the legislative. He liked the two Houses. But he looked with disfavour on the reëligibility of the president, and the absence of something like a Bill of Rights. He abhorred a standing army. He felt sensitively the pull of a strong government. Yet his mind was open to the arguments in favour of this child of compromise. Its wise champion, James Madison, was Jefferson's trusted early friend in Virginia. He argued for the adoption of the Constitution in "The Federalist," a campaign collection of eight-five short essays which profoundly influenced a scattered public uncertain of itself. Madison and others also privately set forth their reasons to Jefferson, who became at last convinced that the true course was to ratify, and then to propose amendments.

John Adams, a Federalist, had called the Constitution "a promising essay," and in fully as cordial a spirit Jefferson wrote: "It will be more difficult, if we lose this instrument, to recover what is good in it than to correct what is bad after we shall have adopted it. It has therefore my hearty prayers."

Nevertheless Jefferson came back more as a free lance than as a warm supporter of the young government. He declared that he was not a Federalist, neither was he an Anti-federalist. He certainly was not in opposition; and Washington, just unanimously elected President of the new Republic, at once asked him to be his Secretary of State. As Washington had been elected by no party, he appointed his secretaries with careful consideration for the wide range of his constituency. They did not form a cabinet in the necessary sense of complete support which is the meaning to-day. The posts were given both to Federalists and to Anti-federalists. Jefferson, in spite of his assertion of a neutral position, was known to be a lax democrat who had said in a moment of unfettered speculation, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

For his Secretary of the Treasury Washington had also chosen a man of extreme ideas; a young man whom he loved like a son; whom he had discovered to be a constructive genius, and with whose pronounced views concerning a centralised power he was, to a sensible degree, in sympathy. This was Alexander Hamilton. Born in the British West Indies thirty-two years before, he had come to New York when a young lad. At seventeen, while a collegian, he was making fiery yet sagacious speeches against British tyranny. Before twenty he was a skilful captain of artillery in the Continental army; and at Yorktown he led one of the storming parties that decided that last battle of the Revolution. As Washington's military secretary, he was not only profoundly influenced by the practical political views

of his leader; he in return, it has been believed, exercised a certain influence upon Washington through the extraordinary logical clearness with which he formulated and developed suggestions he had caught from his General.

Not a subordinate mind, however, was Hamilton's; as a political individuality he was the peer of Washington; as a political philosopher he was more distinct than Washington; as a political builder he was the most practical, the most comprehensive, and the most immediately effective of any of the group who established the United States government. But Hamilton and Jefferson stood for absolutely antagonistic principles.

Hamilton's foreign birth and temper and his absence of interest in many of the inherently local questions influenced his point of view on a new republic and her needs. His, too, was that type of mind which thinks of the people as existing for the purposes of government rather than of government as existing for the convenience of the people. Naturally, a strong seat of power had from the outset appealed to him as a necessary establishment. What had been the convictions of the American pioneers, or what had grown to seem the peculiar rights of provincial communities had little weight, as he broadly considered the sub-structure of a stable central government.

Jefferson, at the opposite pole, could never regard his neighbor, his Colony, or his country in such an impersonal way. He was not devoted to any scheme for governing his fellows. He wanted them free to expand as nature and their vast possibilities led; and he wanted their expansion to be evolutionary, working out the great law of human freedom. It

was inevitable that a spirited policy, which looked at the whole first and the individual last, and which always sank the single State before the Federal government, should arouse his abhorrence, and be the mark of his unsleeping antagonism.

When Hamilton began to give to Congress those marvellous reports which embodied the great features of his plan for re-making the confederation into a nation, Jefferson was already looking askance at his colleague. Indeed, he had begun to suspect monarchical tendencies from the time when he came home, fresh from French enthusiasms, and had heard at the dinners given in his honour certain of the heady expressions then more or less fashionable among the young bloods. Time soon showed these after-dinner proclivities to be without substance, and the would-be aristocrats were utterly without a following. But to Jefferson's sensitiveness they seemed to be symptomatic of dangerous tendencies which he believed Hamilton was fostering.

During the first year of the first administration, Hamilton's genius had been dominant, and his indefatigability had achieved great things in organisation before Jefferson came into the cabinet. Washington's ability was supreme, because his integrity and sound sense created a universal confidence. This popular confidence made him the unique man for holding together the loose parts until a master builder like Hamilton could secure them by a series of great commercial and financial strokes.

Because the new Constitution was signally lacking in provisions for individual security, almost immediately after the government organised, ten amendments were adopted by Congress and were directly ratified by the States. They were not satis-

factory to the extreme Anti-Federalists, who affected to regard them as a sop given by the friends of repressive government. But to all intents and purposes, they were honestly for security of person, property, speech and religion, a veritable "Bill of Rights."

Commerce had also been regulated and a Tariff Act passed. This Act stated as one of its objects "the encouragement and protection of manufactures," thus broadly hinting at the high protective tariff which many years later would be a dividing party issue.

At the beginning of 1790, Hamilton had offered his report on the settlement of the public debt. It consisted of three recommendations, the first being that the Federal government should assume and pay in full the foreign war debt of the Confederacy. To this no opposition was offered. But the second recommendation, that the national domestic debt—expressed at that time in almost worthless paper—should also be liquidated, aroused objections from many thoughtful citizens. It was argued that speculators had acquired these securities for almost nothing, and that they would be the ones to reap fortunes for which the people must pay. Hamilton, however, and all who believed broadly in assumption, held stoutly to the doctrine that public credit must be built up, whoever suffered or whoever benefited; and they won the point in Congress.

In the third place, Hamilton advised that the debts incurred by the individual States during the Revolution should be paid by the nation. This was certainly a grave proposal, and, as must have been anticipated by the bold financier, started the Anti-Federalists, jealous for State prerogative and fearful

of an alliance between government and the money power, into instant suspicion. When the opposition to this scheme proved obstinate, Hamilton resorted to political bargaining, which had no better nor worse complexion than the same sort has to-day. It was quite a plain deal, and Jefferson was the other party. Jefferson gave enough Southern votes to carry this measure, in exchange for the promise to locate the new National Capital on the Potomac. Thus, Hamilton's entire report, which was, in fact, the core of his plan for centralising power, was successful. Later, Jefferson repented his part in the unpopular bargain; he tried to explain; and by admitting that he had been less astute than his rival, accepted a horn to his dilemma. If he had been "most ignorantly and innocently made to hold the candle" in this financial game, it was plainly because he could not see the far reach of moves. He gave much and got little.

Full assumption of all public debts by the nation was a broad measure which must be met by adequate funds. To this Hamilton was duly alive. He had thought the thing through and was perfectly prepared to suggest ways and means for revenue. The Excise Law was passed after bitter opposition in Congress. The excise and an increase of the tariff were sources of income which must be opened to the national treasury. If the government assumed much, it ought to receive liberally. This was clear as daylight to the man whose large imagination was in wise balance with the absoluteness of business principles.

Jefferson, on the other hand, had been antagonistic to the idea of lumping and assuming the family debts; he consequently felt averse to means devised to pay

them. Each State ought to shift for itself in finance; run in debt; pay or repudiate; and therefore tax as it saw fit. A national internal tax was repugnant to his state-sovereignty ideas. Moreover, a great national debt gave him vague alarms. While he objected to Hamilton's devices for the orderly payment of principal and arrears of interest, he was paralysed by the new doctrine which that statesman also held and boldly expressed, that "a national debt, if it is not excessive, will be a national blessing, a powerful cement of union, a necessity for keeping up taxation, and a source of industry." He saw corruption, speculation, and gigantic prosperity for the well-to-do in each constructive measure of the Secretary of the Treasury. That these appeared to a degree the obvious results of so absolute a policy is no doubt true. But who can now believe that a financial policy so far-reaching and well-working was designed by its originator to serve mean ends? Both these remarkable statesmen are justified by posterity because of the soundness of their imagination. But Jefferson's faith in his own reach of vision never led him to scrutinize Hamilton's schemes except at closest range where the immediate flaws obscured the potency and promise.

Compromise formed no part of Hamilton's mental constitution. He no sooner gained one feature of his large plan than he was ready to push forward a new one, more daring and yet more resistlessly logical than the last. This was the admiration of the "treasury party," as Jefferson called his followers, and the despair of the many who distrusted the tendency of his course. His next report recommended the establishment of a national bank, as a necessary and convenient agent for the collection of taxes and

revenue, and as a depository for the same. Over this arose a prolonged constitutional controversy which, though settled at the time, was never left at rest until as late as 1836. After a warm debate as to the power of Congress to create such a bank, both Houses decided in favour of their constitutional right, and passed the bill.

Washington hesitated between the dominant side, to which he naturally inclined, and the strong opposition represented in his cabinet by Jefferson. Both Secretaries were asked to present to him their opposing views in writing. This gave to him and to state history two very famous papers. The argument developed radical roots of division concerning the interpretation of the Constitution. Jefferson was for a strict construction of its general clauses, the rigidity of which should preclude any ingenious extension of Federal power. Hamilton advocated a liberal or loose construction of its terms, in order to gain a wide sweep for the exercise of national prerogative. The implied powers of the Constitution were insisted upon. His doctrine was, to a degree, subversive of the extreme democracy which had cradled the Republic, and it was consequently hateful to Jefferson's mind.

Washington listened, weighed evidence, and decided to sign the bill. Whatever the legal truth of the question, a national bank proved to be at that day expedient; and its establishment was followed by none of the immediate mischief which Jefferson, in his opposition, prophesied.

Thus Hamilton continued to report measures which Jefferson was quite sure to oppose,—sometimes openly, more often by indirection. The establishment of the mint, the protection of manufactures,

and the standing army, were questions which brought conflict and further organisation of hostile parties into the cabinet. Jefferson's attitude was no longer tentative. His personal distrust of Hamilton fed upon every act of that restless genius. It is always the misfortune of the opposition to appear carping and ill-natured; particularly was it so at this time, when the initiative of the Treasury Department rendered the Secretary of State inconspicuous save for his strictures. Jefferson's way of fighting was probably temperamental and cannot be justly criticised apart from the man. Yet no admirer can help wishing that he had given his thrusts less covertly. Especially open to censure was his continuation of the personal feud in the venomous "Anas,"—cruel records of those years, which he left to be published after his own death and that of his adversary.

During this period of constructive finance Hamilton appears admirable; the man who had a deep and comprehensive plan which he knew how to present forcibly and carry out successfully. In contrast, Jefferson seems almost a novice, theoretical and incompetent. Yet it must be remembered that the logical, classifying type of mind, which is splendidly master of most situations, has also grave limitations. Into the realm of the prophet it never enters. While Hamilton was concerned to ally to his strengthening scheme the powerful interests of property, Jefferson was as truly concerned for the people. He was at all times vastly more than the mere obstructionist. He was prophetically intuitive concerning the masses, feeling that they needed then and always an advocate. He forecast that this system of the Secretary of the Treasury, "which flowed from principles adverse to liberty," as he wrote in his Apologia

to Washington, would ever more and more attract to it the prosperous. His intellectual sympathies warmed towards the voiceless of the land; and because he was both strategist and visionist he longed to be their leader in the future.

Washington's judicial mind and elevation of temper put him on a plane apart from both financier and philanthropist. He desired reconciliation of interests and a full harmony in his political family. It cannot be doubted that this discoverer of men valued the rival Secretaries each for his full worth; but he found his present helpmeet in Hamilton, and he could only strive to hold Jefferson, as a valuable leader, through personal loyalty. He had not adequately realised the necessary division of the country into contending political forces, or that these were already embodied in the two natural party-makers whom he had chosen to be his chief advisers.

The negative term, "Anti-Federalist," at first applied broadly to all who were dissatisfied under the Federal government, had now become a misnomer. The opposition had come around to loyalty to the Constitution; at the same time it had been welded into a party organisation which had defined principles, and it had learned to understand the party in power which it meant to fight. The French Revolution had diverted attention from home politics, but had at the same time, by the feelings it elicited, emphasised the proclivities of each party. The Anti-federalists re-named themselves "Republicans" in contrast to "Monarchists" and "Monocrats,"—names which Jefferson loved to give to Hamilton and his friends. Later arose the term "Democratic-Republican," which has always since remained the official name of the great party Jefferson founded, although

the common abbreviation has become "Democratic." The Federalists first used the name, "Democrats," in derision.

The declaration of war between France and Great Britain, in April, 1793, deeply concerned the people of the United States. Their sympathies were already variously given since French politics had long engrossed their attention. The great body of citizens had been kindly minded towards the agitated masses in France from the beginning of their uprising. Their republicanism had seemed at first the response of Europe to the New World's liberty call. And even the wild tumults and dire crises of '92 and '93 had not made the people of Paris less dear to the majority of Americans. They accepted Jacobin supremacy with surprising readiness, forming all over the country Democratic clubs vociferously imitative of sansculottism in Paris.

Jefferson, tactful and pacific of temperament, was the intellectual leader of this republic-mad multitude. His predilections, his prejudices, and sudden party opportunity, all drew him to the perilously popular cause. He explained, after the massacres, that he deplored the death of many innocents, but wrote: "I deplore them as I should have done had they fallen in battle. It was necessary to use the arm of the people,—a machine not quite so blind as balls and bombs, but blind to a certain degree." But the conserving element in America, Anglo-Saxon to the last drop, was not swept clean of sense by friendship claims or by Gallic declarations of liberty and equality. It repudiated kinship with the wild workers at the guillotine, and it assumed a judicial middle ground toward the old common foe, England. The men who took this saner position were in the Federal-

ist ranks, although they were called "Anglomaniacs" and "Anglomen" by the Republicans, who at this time were a pronounced French party.

Washington had been elected President a second time. He was insistent that Jefferson should still remain a member of his cabinet, in spite of the jarring foreign policies which found expression there. The first question for executive decision was whether the United States should hold to its treaty with France for offensive and defensive alliance, or should consider the treaty nullified by the latter's change of government. Jefferson held loyally to France,—the tried friend of the revolting colonies, the loaner of money for their war, the newly-made sister Republic. Hamilton saw the reverse side,—France's determination to entangle the United States, England's displeasure, commerce still more wrecked. Yet both united, reservedly, with Washington's decision, that the treaty was not in force and that it was proper to proclaim neutrality. A storm of adverse feeling beat about this proclamation.

The situation grew complicated by the arrival of Citizen Genet, Minister from the new Republic. Jefferson, as Secretary of State, gave him official recognition and fraternal cordiality; he expected him to win wide popular favour for the French democratic sentiments with which he would inspire his new party. But the Frenchman immediately lost his sense. He took incredible liberties. He regarded this shore as a base of French military operations and began to fit out privateers against England. His intemperateness of speech and his criticisms of Washington's policy shocked even a people who knew nothing of diplomatic ethics. Even the most democratic Secretary of State felt that his position required him

to send Genet curt official communications, relative to his diplomatic insolence. However, no warning, official or friendly, was able to save the misguided man from his own folly, which reached excess when he threatened to appeal from Washington to the people if the administration did not steer its course to suit him. Genet's recall was promptly asked for, the people vindicated Washington's course, and Jefferson discreetly withdrew from prominent advocacy of the French cause.

The American people now seemed to have escaped the rocks of an entangling alliance with France only to dash hopelessly against England's perverse hostility. Neutrality was no calm sea, with Indian outbreaks excited at home and Algerine pirates abroad upon the sea—by English connivance, as it was believed—American seamen impressed by the English, and American ships, bound for France, forced to head for English ports.

Jefferson had for some time wished to quit his ineffectual post; now, being yet more at odds with the prevailing policy, he insisted that Washington should allow him to withdraw from the cabinet. He was weary of controversy, and he felt too, with canny instinct, that he would be able to reassert himself more surely by retiring for the present.

In this retirement Jefferson remained three years. It seems to have been almost a periodic requirement of his peculiar temperament that he should now and again resort to private life, where contention could not touch him, and while the cumulative forces of his influence gathered for him new confidence and prestige.

In the delight of farming Jefferson lost perturbance, and again felt his youthful ardour in the pur-

suit which he declared "got the better entirely of his love of study." He wrote letters, "farmer-like, only on rainy days." But while growing lucerne and potatoes at remote Monticello, he was more than ever theoretically interested in general politics. His mind worked unreservedly on old lines. In his copious correspondence he was again the unfettered champion of freedom, in all its manifestations. When Washington was induced to condemn the democratic societies, modeled after the Jacobin Club, Jefferson was indignant at what he felt to be "an attack on the freedom of discussion, the freedom of writing, printing and publishing"; and he professed himself disturbed lest the President should fall away from that unmatched impartiality which had made him the Colossus of men,—"lest his honesty and his political errors" drive the people to revile, "Curse on his virtues! they have undone his country."

Jefferson had called the Excise Law "an infernal one," and now he all but openly sympathised with the active resistance to it in the "Whiskey Insurrection." That Federal force should be displayed against State authority hurt him sorely.

In 1795 John Jay negotiated his unsatisfactory treaty with England. Its terms were the best he could make, but their publication set the country aflame. Jefferson styled it "an execrable thing"; Republicans generally went wild over its tame surrender of the rights of American commerce. No more blasting aspersions have ever been cast upon an Executive than assailed Washington after he had signed the treaty. The administration seemed toppling. Hamilton entered the hot discussion as "Camillus." Then Jefferson begged Madison to come down into the lists; "For God's sake," he said,

"take up your pen and give a fundamental reply to 'Curtius' and 'Camillus.'" But Washington's firmness and patience saved the hour. He withstood the House of Representatives when it demanded of him a copy of Jay's instructions, refusing to yield the least recognition to its unconstitutional interference with the treaty-making power. Public opinion veered at length to his position, that some kind of treaty was better than none, and the acute crisis passed.

The vindication of the administration and of its British policy did not leave Jefferson hopeless of eventual triumph for his party. He was prophetic of a speedy reversal of popular judgment, and even thought that the Republicans might carry the next presidential election.

After being eight years at the head of the nation, Washington had decided to retire. He longed for the peace of his plantation, and he was unhappy over the growing party divergencies. His Farewell Address is a lofty witness to the unselfishness of his patriotism and to his belief in the direction of the new Federal government. There was no rancour in his feelings, although they had been deeply wounded by the scurrilous attacks upon his last administration. He still hoped that honest patriots would come to be of one mind and form a great national party.

By declining a reëlection Washington left the field open to the contest of parties and of men. It would have seemed natural that Hamilton should be a candidate for succession to the place of his great patron; but practical politics decided then, as they have so often since, that the most conspicuous man was ineligible. He was by nature and destiny a prime minister.

Next in prominence among the Federalists was staunch, irascible John Adams, Vice-President under Washington. The Federalist party at last united to make him its candidate.

For the opposition,—the restless, resisting minority, which might prove to be a majority,—there was one inevitable leader,—the enemy of strong government, the friend of republican France, the advocate of State rights, and the defender of every right that centered inherently in the individual himself. This was Thomas Jefferson. The days of unanimity were indeed past, for this third presidential election developed extreme partisanship and abuse. Nothing more conscienceless than the pamphlets and newspapers of that campaign, as they flung accusations at the two candidates, can be imagined. Jefferson was an enemy to order and Christianity. "The monarchist Adams" would prove to be a specious tyrant, undermining free institutions.

At this critical juncture Citizen Adet, the Minister of France, presented an "Address to the American People," which was a most agitating diplomatic document, since it presumed to reproach the administration, and threatened the suspension of intercourse with the United States if republican principles did not prevail at the coming election.

The electoral votes, which were counted by Congress in February, 1797, represented sixteen States. Adams was elected by one vote more than a majority; while Jefferson, with three votes less, had the next highest number and thus became Vice-President. The anomaly of placing men whose party principles were antagonistic in nominal partnership, was possible because the votes for President and Vice-President were not at that time cast separately. The highest

number of votes elected the President, the next highest number the Vice-President. This apparently innocent provision of the Constitution was shown to be a fateful blunder at the following presidential election, when it so nearly lost to Jefferson his rightful lead on the successful double-headed Republican ticket.

Jefferson's entrance into office was studiously simple. He said, "I hope I shall be made a part of no ceremony whatever. I shall escape into the city as covertly as possible." If this was playing to the gallery, it was guileless and not dissonant with his taste and creed. At first he was sanguine of acquiring some influence over the President. With Washington's overtopping personality gone, and Hamilton out of the cabinet, there was a bare chance for him to become a power in the incoming administration. Certainly he indulged in no quixotic idea of smoothing over matters between Hamilton, who was still the real leader of the Federalists, and the egotistical President, who had yet to show himself master of his own administration. Jefferson had no dislike for communicating his hatred of the ex-Secretary of War at any time; certainly not when it might be turned to some good account.

But Adams was a man on whom nice calculations were almost sure to fail; so that the exchange of initial courtesies between the two, and the "free conversation" which the President had been pleased to express himself as desiring, proved to be more deceptive to Jefferson than luring to Adams. After some consultation regarding the appointment of commissioners to France, Adams precipitately dropped the Vice-President, "and he never," wrote Jefferson,

"after that said one word on the subject or ever consulted me as to any measures of the government."

In fact, Adams' situation in his cabinet became shortly so intolerable that he had quite enough to settle there without allowing the disingenuous counsel of a political interloper. He had kept all the members of Washington's cabinet. They, as well as Washington, had continued to be influenced by Hamilton, and even now they remained in close correspondence with him. The President consulted his own dignity as chief of his cabinet, when it became sure that the advice he received there was instigated from without by the retired Secretary; he grew more imperious and less inclined to seek or accept counsel. Interference and resentment soon divided the dominant party into angered factions, and cut the way for its disaster in 1800.

Looking beyond home, the clouds of foreign war seemed ready to burst on the administration as they had on most governments abroad. Napoleon's victories were making France overbold. She had indecently expelled the American minister and was grown more openly hostile to American commerce. She was evidently punishing her former friend for being on speaking terms with England, and she was said to be offended because Jefferson was not made President. All this was extremely exasperating to Adams, and to the spirit of the country at large. Measures for defensive war were prepared. Still, the President desired peace and made a new effort towards it by sending three commissioners to treat with the insolent French Directory.

Jefferson was watchful and gloomy. War was in any case a terror to him. War with France touched

his heart-strings. He wrote: "The insults and injuries committed upon us by both the belligerent parties, from the beginning of 1793 to this day, and still continuing, cannot now be wiped off by engaging in war with one of them." His letter to his old friend and neighbor, Mazzei, an Italian then abroad, paints a black picture of the political aspect of the country. This letter, returned to the American public through several translations, became unpleasantly famous through certain allusions it contained, which the Federalists declared to be sinister and base. At this distance they appear to be more dyspeptic than personal and backbiting.

The Republicans had now their loyalty to the French Republic severely taxed. The commissioners whom Adams had despatched were received contemptuously by the Directory. Their long-suffering was met by rascally demands for a public loan and a private bribe from the emissary of Talleyrand. The failure and withdrawal of the commission was followed by a full disclosure at home of the shameless overtures of the French minister,—the infamous *X.Y.Z.* letters, inspired by him, were published. The Federalists were wildly indignant over the whole insulting business. The great mass of the people were with them in the excited exasperation. It was at this time that the slogan arose: "Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute."

The Republicans were gravely embarrassed by such unworthiness in the object of their love. But their leader, Jefferson, was sublime in his ability to look largely at the case, and to refuse to consider the French people unlovely because Talleyrand or the Directory had done despicably. In this unfailing faith in the scrambles of humanity, Jefferson bore a

striking resemblance to Lincoln. Both Washington and Jefferson were inflexible, equally so, in their confidence that republicanism was rational and safe. But Washington's faith in the people seemed to originate in his own character, while Jefferson's was the result of a superlative understanding of the people themselves.

Adams responded to the general indignation by refusing to send another minister until satisfactory assurance had been given that he would be received becomingly, as the representative of a "great, free, independent and powerful people." Congress, full of war spirit, passed laws establishing an army and creating a navy. The Federalists were the confident leaders. Washington was made lieutenant-general of the new army, but Hamilton was its real organiser. The navy was opposed by the Republicans, but several good warships were built, privateers were commissioned, and there were a few sea-fights with the tri-colour. The country vigorously prepared for war, unconscious that a state of preparedness might save it from the war it wanted but was not at all fit for.

Just then, when the fever was at its height and the peace men were saying least, President Adams did the unexpected. He snubbed his hostile cabinet and thwarted the popular inclination; but by his diplomacy, saved his unready country from a needless war. When France indirectly intimated that a new minister would be received, he took the olive-branch; his Secretaries opposed him and the stiff war-party condemned him; nevertheless, he despatched a commission of three, who eventually arranged a treaty, —not with the Directory but with the new First Consul.

But the Federalists had been proving themselves unfit leaders. They were largely the intellect, wealth and culture of the country, and took sweeping views of the prerogative of government; they naturally but fatuously overreached themselves. With the memory of Genet's insolence fresh in mind, and still smarting under the tremendous invectives and the scurrilous personalities with which their administration had been attacked, they determined to put a stop to such things once and forever. They passed the famous Alien and Sedition Laws. The first, it is true, was only a two-year measure, but that period would be enough for the drastic lesson. The law authorised the President to "order such aliens as he should judge dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States, or should have reasonable grounds to suspect were concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations against the government thereof, to depart out of the United States." He was also empowered, in case of war, to cause the subjects of the hostile government "to be apprehended, restrained, secured and removed, as alien enemies."

The Sedition Law was still more imperious, and was a deep cut at the cherished liberty of the Americans themselves. It was made a punishable offense for citizens to combine with intent to oppose the government in the exercise of its authority; to intimidate a Federal officer; to instigate insurrections against the laws of Congress; or to utter false, scandalous and malicious writings against the government, either Congress or the President; to stir up sedition, or to give aid to a foreign nation in any hostility towards the United States. These laws were passed in the summer of 1798. The first expired with its two-year limit; the other has never been annulled, but it soon

fell into "innocuous desuetude," to quote an apt, if cumbrous, phrase of a later President.

These laws were Jefferson's opportunity. His party, though bluffed into temporary silence, had been held in admirable discipline. The cockaded Democratic clubs, existing even to the remote frontiers, had been strenuous preachers of Jefferson's rights of man and rights of States. To these earnest men the Alien and Sedition Laws,—particularly the latter—were intolerable; and more and more of the people came to their way of thinking. It was not difficult to set men to asking, in view of the Sedition Law, What is government for? Is it for itself, or is it for the interests of the governed? Here was an object-lesson so palpable that it needed little more than the stating, and the Vice-President was instant in giving the cue to his trained leaders the country over.

The full expression of his views came out in what is known as the "Kentucky Resolutions." These were a set of trenchant declarations, passed by the legislature of the State of Kentucky, protesting that Congress had assumed a power which did not belong to it, and had passed laws contrary to the Constitution, which guaranteed liberty of speech and of the press.

These resolutions were ascribed to Jefferson; perhaps he wrote them; he certainly inspired them. They contained in embryo a doctrine of fateful significance, which was to grow until it caused the most terrible war of the century. It was the doctrine of nullification. It considered the Federal Union nothing but a contract between the States on one side and the government on the other. If the government violated the terms, the States might nullify its action,

But though Jefferson and his Democrats formulated this theory, which was to tempt the nation for sixty years, the Federalists were really responsible for it. Their wanton overreach of power arrested the beginnings of the feeling of national solidarity. If this imperialism was the result of union, then it was better, many argued, to keep in remembrance that sovereignty which the States had never wholly abdicated; the Federal government must never forget that it was the creature of a contract which could be broken if it became offensive to any of the partners.

Jefferson perceived instantly this blunder in tactics by the Federalists; and the use he made of it to electrify his own nascent party showed his political genius. He began immediately to be hopeful of success in the general elections of 1800. He was even more sanguine when the Federalists filled their campaign with personal abuse, and he was so astute as to leave the bear-garden method entirely unused.

The Federalists evidenced their grave concern at the new turn of popular sentiment by urging Washington again to be candidate for election. While still refusing, he died. President Adams was consequently the inevitable candidate. But he was a weak one now. For four years the breach between him and the other Federalist leaders had been widening. So it was disintegration against matchless organisation in the fight at the polls. The stalwart old party broke in pieces, and fresh blood came into power.

Sixteen States took part in this election of 1800. Aaron Burr, a remarkably brilliant but unprincipled man, was associated with Jefferson on the Democratic-Republican ticket. After a sharp contest in the

doubtful States, this ticket was elected: seventy-three votes of the electors were cast for Jefferson, and seventy-three for Burr. As the Constitution at that time defectively provided, the candidate receiving most votes in the Electoral College was to be President, and the one receiving the next largest number was to be Vice-President. But the party organisation of the Democratic-Republicans was so thorough that Jefferson and Burr received an equal vote,—a likely but apparently unforeseen mischance. Again, according to the Constitution, this unfortunate tie among the electors threw the choice into the House of Representatives. But the House was Federalist, and this fact opened hazardous chances for the victorious but thwarted party.

The disappointment of the Federalists reflected more than a passing defeat. The reins of government, which they had managed with high-handed skill, were passing to another party; an untried party, —considered by old-line Federalists unsound and unsafe in doctrine. But every honest Federalist must have felt that Jefferson, "an atheist in religion and a fanatic in politics," as they called him, was the truest man and the most accomplished statesman of the opposition, and therefore fittest for the place which his party had intended to give him. Nevertheless, an intrigue soon developed among their members in the House. One plan was to obstruct action till after the Fourth of March, 1801,—when both offices would be declared vacant and a new election held. This was not long entertained as feasible. Another plan was to support Burr. This spiteful resolve to give votes to a profligate candidate and balk the will of the Republicans was ardently opposed by Hamilton. In

saving his party from such everlasting disgrace he became an advocate for the election of his old detractor, Jefferson.

On the 17th of February, 1801, after thirty-six ballots, Jefferson received the votes of a majority of the States. Jefferson was then declared elected President and Burr Vice-President. The session of Congress which was principally occupied with this unique dilemma was the first held in the new capital city of Washington. The ordeal in no wise affected the temper of Jefferson. He was sure of his leadership, and the accidents of election were not vital to him. The hard-won result was the natural crown of his labours. To have kept it from him would have been a fraud which he could have borne better than the nation. Thus, at the age of fifty-eight, after more than a quarter of a century of devotion to ideas, about which had crystallised his party, Jefferson began his first term as the first Democratic-Republican President.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT.

After twelve years Jefferson's party had won. The party which in 1788 had elected Washington, and comprised nearly all the people, was now out of power, save in the judiciary branch.

Jefferson was wonderfully suited to the task of ushering in a new party and policy. He coupled a dexterous adaptability with the fervour of convictions. He was not so bothered with consistency as to feel that he must disregard any proven good thing of Federalist origin because he had once opposed it. He knew the art of reiterating aggressive party tenets without converting them into actual difficulties. He knew the rude people and was ready to meet their love of democratic simplicity. He understood the largest use of a cabinet and of coadjutors, consulting them, and at the same time imbuing them with the spirit of his individual policy. This extensive multiplication of himself was his peculiar gift.

Jefferson was the first president to be inaugurated in the new Federal city of Washington. This was but a raw village, surrounded by a swamp, and with the smallest beginnings of social life. Here he had lived simply as Vice-President, and on the day of his inauguration he walked from his lodgings to the new Capitol where Congress was in session. He was escorted by a company of artillery; he was received by Vice-President Burr, who had previously taken the

oath of office; he delivered his inaugural address, and Chief Justice Marshall administered the oath. President Adams did not assist at the ceremony; he had driven out of Washington that same morning on the way to his home in Massachusetts. He was too deeply stung by defeat to witness the spectacle of the entrance of the new order.

Simplicity became at once a distinct feature of the new administration. In the matter of social functions this was favoured by the rude conditions of the newly mapped out city where Government had just established itself. But had Jefferson entered office either in New York or Philadelphia, it is likely he would have admired still more to point the contrast between presidential plainness and urban display,—between his way and that of his predecessors. He was not without histrionic sense of what would be most telling with the plain people.

To emphasise the approachableness he held to be proper in a president of a democratic republic, Jefferson made certain bold changes. He discontinued the levees and courtly drawing-rooms which Washington had surrounded with exclusive etiquette. He received the British minister at his presentation with studied informality. According to that diplomatist's own description, while he went in full official costume, the President appeared in slippers down at the heels, and with a disordered personal appearance which could only be called slovenly. From Washington, standing with cocked hat in one hand and the other on the hilt of his sword in its white scabbard, which appeared from beneath his velvet coat, to Jefferson in this unpardonable undress, seems a far cry. No more court dress, no more stately levees, no more coaches and sixes. His first official message to Con-

gress was written and sent, instead of being read in person to both Houses, which had been the practice of Washington and Adams. Here was a sharp departure from monarchical usage, captivating to democracy.

Succeeding presidents have followed the example of simplicity which Jefferson set, though they have not felt it necessary to imitate the untidiness which was intolerable in a gentleman of Jefferson's breeding. In the permanence of severe plainness as the habit of the American Executive, is the mark of Jefferson's divination of the prevailing wish of the American people.

Jefferson delivered his inaugural address, in the manner of his predecessors, in the Senate Chamber. In this speech he expressed his idea of the American people, the creed of the party he had created, and made certain general statements which indicated the programme of his administration. It was full of love for the country and was catholic in its sentiments. "We have called by different names," he exclaimed, "brethren of the same principles. We are all Republicans,—we are all Federalists." Nevertheless he stood by the teachings he had been inculcating among the people. The essential principles of government for this new regime were his well-known theories redacted for practice.

There must be equal and exact justice for all men. In foreign relations, peace, commerce, and friendship should be cultivated with all nations, entangling alliances with none. The State governments should be carefully guarded in all their original rights; the Federal government should be preserved with all the rigour which is allowed to it by the Constitution. The people's elections should be jealously safe-

guarded, and there should be absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority. In military affairs he conservatively followed the practice of the Revolutionary War, and recommended a well-disciplined State militia, which should serve as the first line of defence in any possible war; to be supported by a regular army which the exigency would develop. The civil authority should be supreme over the military. Strict economy should prevail in all public expense, in order that the burdens of labour should be lightened. As to the public debt, the only course was to pay it. Agriculture must receive prime encouragement, and so must commerce, because it is its handmaid. The light of publicity must be thrown upon the acts of government, in order that all abuses may be arraigned at the bar of public reason. Freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of the person, under protection of the habeas corpus and trial by impartial juries,—these are the bright principles, attained by revolution, to which government must be unfailingly true.

Reiteration for a hundred years has made these rudimentary generalisations sound often like stock phrases; but when Jefferson said them at the dawn of the century and at the beginning of the rule of democracy, they were pregnant and prophetic. He said them simply and he believed them sincerely. He was sensible of their weight of meaning, and his avowal of the burden of responsibility which he felt for executing them bore a resemblance to the personal note with which Abraham Lincoln appealed for human support, when facing the disruption of the Republic sixty years later.

This address is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable of American state papers. It has been

called grandiloquent and sonorous; but these characteristics were the literary vices of that age on both sides of the sea. Through its classicisms of style we see the play of keen discrimination and accurate mental movement, and behind it the towering faith of the political pioneer. The address, though brief, is monumental in its comprehension of American democracy. For good or ill, the party whose advent it celebrated has never wandered far or long outside of its creed.

With this programme, reactionary yet temperate, Jefferson faced the country where the agricultural majority were his friends, but where a sour, beaten party of great commercial importance hated his overtures and his attacks alike. He was flushed with victory and very sanguine. He read the signs of the times aright. Prosperity was ahead for the land of colonisation, in the natural course of things; it would not have been checked had the Federalists remained in power; and, though the Republicans were to take much credit for it, yet it is fair to say their political policy was coincident with the country's development rather than its cause.

The new President was fortunate in finding foreign affairs less turbulent than during any part of the previous twelve years. England's policy was for the time friendly. Her demonstrations against France were feeble, and she was soon to make the peace of Amiens. The other great European powers had already yielded to Napoleon's victories. The First Consul had amended the convention between France and the United States, and final ratifications had been exchanged.

This tranquillity in foreign relations was seized as a time favourable to assist a strong policy towards the

Barbary States. Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers and Morocco were nests of pirates, and for many years had preyed upon the commerce of Christendom in the Mediterranean. So busy had been the Christian nations with their own affairs that these pestiferous attacks had been unpunished, and tribute money had been regularly paid by European governments for the ransom of captured seamen. American commerce had suffered similarly, and both Washington and Adams had paid actual tribute to the amount of two millions of dollars. Finally the Dey of Algiers committed the incredible outrage of ordering the captain of a United States frigate, which had just conveyed to him the American tribute, to carry Algerine despatches to the Sultan at Constantinople,—and the American was forced to do it.

When the news of this insolence reached America, the President ordered four warships to make a demonstration along the Barbary coast for the protection of American shipping. Fighting soon followed, and continued through Jefferson's first administration. Two-thirds of the navy were engaged, and the daring fights and spirited enterprises of these years are splendid sea-tales; they immortalised a band of gallant officers, set traditions for the young navy, and brought the pirate nations to terms. This war, which made little disturbance at home, indicated the American temper towards sea-bullying. Not its least interesting feature was the use the Democratic-Republican President made of the navy, the creation of which by the Federalists he had recently opposed; his first act was to send it across the ocean upon an aggressive war; the next armed expedition sent by the United States across the ocean was not to be until

Commodore George Dewey sailed into Manila Bay nearly a hundred years later.

At the beginning of his administration Jefferson was straightway besieged by an army of office-seekers. Power was a new experience, and the lusty victors were not modest in their demands. Jefferson had an outfit of a few civil service rules. They were not visionary, they were not adequate to the exigencies of his new position; but they marked a sincere purpose to deal fairly, and they were not kin to the disastrous "spoils system," which President Jackson introduced many years later.

The President believed that an equilibrium in office should be restored; that the Republicans, who had been excluded from all offices since party lines were drawn, should now have a chance at the vacancies. But how are these vacancies to happen? "Those by death are few, by resignation none," was his sententious remark which became famous, although it is better known as the epigram,—"few die and none resign."

It was obvious that the occurrence of vacancies must receive a certain encouragement from the Executive. Nevertheless he wrote: "No man who has conducted himself according to his duties would have anything to fear from me, as those who have done ill would have nothing to hope, be their political principles what they might." Following this text, he set out to remove no person from office merely for holding Federalist opinions. Removals must be "bottomed on some malversation or inherent disqualification." Office-holders who had used their positions for party purposes were properly removed, as were also the lot of Federalists functionaries whom Adams had appointed at the expiring hour of his own office.

As an exception to his rules, Jefferson believed that the United States attorneys and marshals should at the start be Republicans. These being "the doors of entrance into the courts, are indispensable as a shield to the Republican part of our fellow-citizens which, I believe, is the main body of the people," he wrote. This arbitrary demand for Republican officials at the door of the judiciary did not imply a distrust of Federalist honour; it was due rather to his knowledge of human nature and to his sense of the formidable difficulty which courts entirely composed of the beaten Federalists would experience in doing full justice to their victors.

Yet Jefferson was reluctant to deprive men of their offices; he called it "a painful operation." Perhaps, however, he did not hesitate so much on account of the Federalists turned out, as because of the uncertainty of the Republicans put in. He was not overconfident of his own judgment of men's fitness, and he besought much information regarding new candidates. He discountenanced electioneering activity among the Republican office-holders, although naturally it did not always meet the swift retribution that fell upon Federalist incumbents who played politician.

The hateful Alien and Sedition Laws had expired, but men were still lying in prison who had been convicted under them. Jefferson did not hesitate to make speedy use of executive clemency, and to remit the remainder of their terms of imprisonment. He called the Sedition Law "a nullity, as absolute and as palpable as if Congress had ordered us to fall down and worship a golden image."

The Federalists at this point were indulging in some threatening intrigues. They had raged when

they lost the government; they now found themselves losing ground even in New England. Their leaders began to abandon hope of recovering power, and some of them thereupon entertained schemes for a dismemberment of the Union. It seemed better to them to upset altogether the government they had so carefully built than that the party which had originally so bitterly opposed it should be on the box. Secession for the North was gravely discussed among prominent politicians.

All Federalists, however, were not more devoted to party than to country. Hamilton was one of those who stuck, without questioning, to his patriotic principles, and did his utmost to hold his party true to the Nation. In one of his last letters, before he fell in his duel with Vice-President Burr, he wrote to a friend; "You are going to Boston. You will see the principal men there. Tell them for me, as my request, for God's sake to cease these conversations and threatenings about a separation of the Union."

The Federalists had seemed to lose their sense of decency when their defeat became known in December, 1800. From that time until the adjournment of Congress on March 3, 1801, business relating to presidential appointments to office had been pressed with most unbecoming hurry. A judiciary law had been passed by Congress, creating new Federal circuit courts. To provide judges for these and to fill other offices, President Adams, the Secretary of State, and the Senate, had been kept busy almost till the dawn of March 4.

The appointees thus made were termed by the Republicans, the "midnight judges." They were Federalists to a man, and their term was for life. The brains of the country, as the Federalist party

called itself, seemed incapable in its irritation either of good faith or of courtesy in delivering over the government to the commoner order. It meant to hold on to the judiciary at any price.

But the Republican Congress, when it assembled for its first session, in December, 1801, following the advice of the President's message, repealed this odious act; abolished entirely the superfluous bench, and thus deprived the new judges of their offices. This repeal was denounced by the Federalists as unconstitutional; and the Republicans who had thus far stickled for a strict construction of the Constitution, now saw the beauty of a loose interpretation of the oracle. The Federalists, under cover of their constitutional rights, had done a sharp party job; and the Republicans promptly undid it, winking at the Constitution.

In this first message Jefferson suggested another important line of action for Congress. This was the abolition of all internal taxes. He thought they were tyrannous burdens, and that duties on imports could support government, pay the interest on the public debt, and reduce the principal as well. But how? For, if private burdens were thus lightened by the stopping of excise receipts, the public income would be lessened. His answer was,—naturally, by retrenchment in national expenses. That too, he thought, was a desirable thing in itself. He had already used his executive power to reduce the diplomatic force; if now internal taxes were removed, internal revenue officers would go; and there could also be a further lopping-off in the civil list.

Furthermore, according to the careful estimate of the Secretary of War, adequate garrisons for time of peace could be kept up with a considerable reduction

of the present military establishment; and in case of foreign invasion, the local militia was the only possible first line of defence for such a vastly exposed country. It was extremely uncertain how much it would be wise to expend on the navy; he had already slackened such expenditures as he found in progress. The fortification of harbours was a dreadful expense; at many points was it not ill-advised?

These recommendations were popular at large, and in Congress the working majority was united in carrying them out by immediate legislation. By the act of March 31, 1802, taxes were removed from liquors, licenses, auctions, carriages, refined sugar, as well as from stamps and postage on newspapers. This seems a curious assortment, and it is difficult to understand the popular odium attached to an excise which touched no necessity of life. Tax our salt but save us from stamps, was, however, a human prejudice which a hundred years has not removed. Thus were cut off half the offices at the disposal of the administration, and an income of nearly a million of dollars.

The army was reduced to three thousand men,—the peace establishment of 1796. This reduced the other side of the account by nearly half a million. As an important military offset, the Academy at West Point was opened. The appropriation for the improvement and increase of the navy was cut down; the process of building new ships was thereby stopped. The sale of unnecessary vessels had already reduced the navy to thirteen ships. The pay of the officers of the customs was fixed at moderate salaries.

Thus, early in the administration was struck the keynote of future democratic policy,—that of retrenchment.

The President had also recommended a third revi-

sion,—that of the naturalization laws passed during the administration of Adams. These required a residence of fourteen years before an alien could become a citizen. Fourteen years, Jefferson maintained, was a large fraction of a man's life; such a probation was not the policy of the first settlers; such was not the hospitality of the savages to our fathers. These sentiments, comforting to aliens, whom Federalism in the last administration had haughtily discountenanced, were also acted upon with willing party spirit.

The new law restored the requirements of 1795 under Washington; these were a residence of five years, with a declaration of intentions three years previous.

These significant acts had met the opposition of the minority; it had been as stormy against them as against the repeal of the judiciary law. Hamilton had attacked every point in the President's message with a sarcastic pen. He ridiculed Jefferson's intellectual capacity and questioned his good faith in proposing to abolish the internal taxes; revision of the judiciary system was the delectable work of disorganization; precipitate naturalization was advised by a foreigner, "who rules the councils of our own ill-fated, unhappy country." This last was a fling at the new Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, the ablest man, next to Hamilton, who had filled that post. But the American people, "huge, misshaped, and blind," as Hamilton, in Virgil's phrase, had once called them, saw differently. The work of this session of Congress was well regarded throughout the country, and confidence in the administration increased.

At this time Jefferson wrote to a friend: "The

session of the first Congress convened since republicanism recovered its ascendancy is now drawing to a close. They will completely fulfil all the desires of the people; they have reduced the army and navy to what is barely necessary. They are disarming executive patronage and preponderance by putting down one-half the offices of the United States, which are no longer necessary. These economies have enabled them to suppress all the internal taxes, and still to make such provision for the payment of their public debt as to discharge that in eighteen years. They have lopped off a parasite limb, planted by their predecessors on the judiciary body for party purposes. They are opening the doors of hospitality to fugitives from the oppressions of other countries. And we have suppressed all those public forms and ceremonies which tended to familiarise the public eye to the harbinger of another form of government."

Satisfied of the inevitable disintegration of the old party, Jefferson calmly endured the diatribes of its leaders. He said: "Their bitterness increases with their desperation. They are trying slanders now, which nothing could prompt but a gall that blinds their judgments as well as their consciences. I shall take no other revenge than by a steady pursuit of economy and peace, and, by the establishment of republican principles, in substance and in form, to sink Federalism into an abyss from which there shall be no resurrection for it."

The purchase of Louisiana is a story of unfailing interest. It was one of those accomplishments that belong to stirring history. It cannot be justly said that this was a plum which fell to Jefferson. Events in the Old World favoured his design; he had remarkable men to carry it out; but what if he had

failed to move at just the right time? What if he had not given to his minister in France broad instructions which yet had an emphasised aim? What if he had not sent Monroe as envoy-extraordinary to represent him still more expressly? In the delicate poise of contending interests in Europe, with the First Consul Bonaparte moving and counter-moving, a day's delay might have meant literally almost a world of difference to the United States. The foolish remark has been made that Jefferson ordered only the buying of a dock-yard but got a possession as large as that which he presided over; but that criticism is made by the same class of detractors who say at the same time that no president was ever more absolute in his authority over cabinet ministers and Congress. If he did delicately touch every spring of action, legislative and administrative, it seems bare reasonableness to give him credit for this most distinguished affair of his administration,—it may not be improper to say of a dozen administrations.

Late in 1800 France had regained from Spain by secret treaty the province of Louisiana. This was an undefined territory, which yet was indisputably co-extensive with the northernmost and southermost boundaries of the United States, including everything between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. Bonaparte had designs upon the New World, and the wily Talleyrand, who was minister in foreign relations to him, as he had been to the Directory, was equally anxious for France to recover what she had given up in her humiliation of 1763.

During the summer of 1801 a rumour of this transaction with Spain reached Rufus King, the American minister to England. He at once communicated it to Jefferson, who immediately cleared his own deck.

His romantic predilections for France were not to interfere with a possible stern duty; as President he realised the national interest as he had not tried to feel it when, under previous administrations, he condoned the effrontery of the French Republic. Here was possibly a worse trouble ahead with France than before. That power, under her new grasping ruler, would become the natural enemy of the United States the moment she held the port of New Orleans and entered upon rights to the vast lands west of the American pioneers. Jefferson wrote to Robert Livingston, his minister to France, that the day France took possession would mark the end of the ancient friendship between her and the United States; marriage to the British fleet and nation would become necessary, and the sentence that was to keep France within her low-water mark would become fixed.

In July, 1802, the King of Spain informed the Intendant of Louisiana of the full transfer of that province, made nearly two years before; and its formal delivery to the French commission was ordered. This Spanish official proceeded to close the port of New Orleans to American merchandise. This was contrary to the stipulation of the treaty of 1795, by which Spain had agreed to leave open to the up-river trade either New Orleans or some other convenient port at the mouth of the Mississippi.

The people of the western country at once suffered from a blockade of their output of tobacco and flour, bacon and hams, which were bound for the warehouses of New Orleans. This created intense excitement and indignation. During the disturbance, word came that a French expedition was preparing to cross the water to take possession of Louisiana.

The President, in his message to Congress in De-

cember, 1802, cautiously referred to the new neighbour who was likely to come into her possession at any time, thereby, he remarked, changing existing foreign relations. He also stated that in one year upwards of nine millions of dollars had been paid from the Treasury towards the principal and interest of the public debt.

The eastern Federalists now became exceedingly jealous for the rights of the western states, and anxious to resent actively the Intendant's course at New Orleans. This sudden zeal over an interest for which they had shown scant sympathy in the days of their power was obviously a bid for lost popularity, and with an idea that a critical issue with France would embarrass Jefferson. Such was their under-estimate of the leader who had beaten them.

In the House, Griswold, a Federalist, moved for official documents relative to the cession of Louisiana to France. The right of the House to call for such papers was disputed by the Republicans, and the call was voted down. The administration party then submitted a resolution which expressed its sensitiveness to any obstruction of the Mississippi River; its unwillingness to attribute such breach of contract to lack of good faith on the part of the King of Spain; its confidence in the wisdom of the Executive; and its fixed determination to maintain all the treaty rights of the United States at the mouth of the Mississippi. The Federalists on their part moved new and warlike resolutions. These were set aside, and the House finally passed the Randolph resolution, embodying President Jefferson's tentative policy.

In the Senate the same attitude was assumed by each party. The Federalists were bent upon annoy-

ing the President, upon obstructing negotiations, and upon provoking war with Spain. This was much the same position that the Republican party had taken in 1794, when war with Great Britain was imminent. Now, however, while allowing Spain's conduct to be odious, it reminded the opposition "that the pacific measure of negotiation was preferred" under Washington's administration; and it cited John Adams's persistence in sending ministers to France in spite of her repeated effronteries. In this case it would seem that the Republicans gained tone by an access of conservatism, while the Federalists appeared awkward and bungling in taking the popular part.

Jefferson told the Senate that it was, and had been from the start, his plan to negotiate for the purchase of such territory as would relieve the embarrassment of American commerce. He expressed his confidence in Livingston, now at the Court of France, but for diplomatic purposes he believed that a man fresh from the United States should be sent over to help the mission. He nominated James Monroe as such an envoy. The Senate confirmed the nomination, and voted two millions of dollars "to defray the expenses which might be incurred in relation to the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations."

Since Jefferson's noteworthy letter had indicated the sweep of his foreign policy, Livingston had done all in his power to present convincingly to Bonaparte American claims, and to get an offer of New Orleans and the eastern bank. For months his efforts were ineffectual. The First Consul was not yet persuaded that the President's diplomatic menace was sus-

tained by the disposition of the people, and he had no idea of selling his lands to the United States to pay his debts to them.

But time and events worked for the designs of Jefferson. The news of a vehement war spirit in Congress no doubt impressed Napoleon. He also saw that his darling object, the colonization of New Orleans, was a tremendous undertaking, at odds with the progress of the new world. Then came the sudden quarrel with England; a war was imminent; France needed money; moreover, Bonaparte believed that the remote territory, which could at this time be converted into stock marketable in London, Amsterdam, or Paris, would very likely become England's first war prize. The domain was more valuable to the United States than to any other power; the Americans were alive to its value and were waiting to make a handsome offer for it. Here was money for his depleted treasury, and a prevention of the threatened alliance between his enemy and the doughty States.

After the services of Easter Sunday, April 10, 1803, the First Consul summoned two of his soundest advisers to St. Cloud, and in the excitement of a new resolution declared to them: "I know the full value of Louisiana, and have been desirous of repairing the fault of the French negotiators who lost it in 1763. A few lines of a treaty have restored it to me, and now I must expect to lose it. . . . The English wish to take possession of it, and it is thus they will begin the war. . . . They have already twenty ships in the Gulf of Mexico. . . . The conquest of Louisiana would be easy. I have not a moment to lose in putting it out of their

reach. . . . The English have successively taken from France the Canadas, Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the richest portions of Asia. But they shall not have the Mississippi, which they covet."

Thus it came about that Livingston received abrupt advances from the First Consul. On April 11, Barbé Marbois, minister of Finance, proposed a sale to the United States, not of an eastern slice of Spain's cession, but of the whole territory termed Louisiana. Monroe arrived the next day, with discretionary powers and with a fresh impulse from Jefferson to strengthen the "importunate negotiator," as Talleyrand had called Livingston. They listened to the terms of Marbois,—one hundred millions of francs. This was considered exorbitant by the two representatives of a government that did not yet know how rich it was. But they were as keen to buy as Bonaparte now was to sell, and an offer of eighty millions of francs was sent back to St. Cloud. After proper higgling, the French minister closed at this price, which meant to the buyers fifteen millions of dollars.

This was the largest conquest ever made by the peaceful means of negotiation and purchase. From the territory then gained has since been cut a dozen great States, lying between the Mississippi and the Rockies. Also the purchase of Louisiana was effective in procuring later the Spanish title to the Pacific shores, which title was the strongest of the many claims which the United States set up to Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

The news of acquisition was at once sent home. The President was deeply gratified, and the purchase quickly became popular with the people, especially

in the South and West. The Federalist remnant criticised the transaction with much rancour, objecting to certain details,—too prejudiced to recognize its value as a whole.

Jefferson knew that the wise thing had been done,—had it been a constitutional measure was another question. He was himself inclined to the view that government had no powers under the Constitution to acquire new territory. But the achievement was its own vindication, although it must appear to shatter Jefferson's political consistency. Being a statesman, however, and not a pedant, he yielded doctrine to fact, to destiny, and to the sense of the people. The Senate ratified the treaty by a large and jubilant majority. The House voted the necessary appropriations for its fulfilment, giving to the President an authority over the colony fully as absolute for the time as Spain's monarch had ever enjoyed.

The new territory was vast,—more than that of all the thirteen States. But its boundaries, both upon the east and upon the west, were ill-defined. Livingston and Monroe thought that Florida was included in the purchase. Talleyrand said, cautiously: "You get all that France had by Ildefonso; it is a great bargain." Bonaparte silenced the scruples of Marbois on this point of obscurity by telling him that "if an obscurity did not already exist, it would perhaps be good policy to put one in the treaty." Moreover, Spain was vexed and uneasy at the unexpected transfer of her possessions, which she had not yet evacuated, and the retrocession of which to France she already regretted. Spurred by the uncertainties of the situation, Jefferson urged on the occupation of New Orleans, and on December 2, 1803, Claiborne took formal possession of the city.

It is to Jefferson's vision and readiness that the least kind critic, who is also just, must accredit this grand purchase. He had sent Monroe as his personal representative, without written instructions, but full of his own determination to win peaceably New Orleans and the Floridas. That the envoy exceeded the letter of any express commission is but the more evidence that he was a perfect representative of his chief's views,—one who was trusted to square his acts to fit the shape the negotiations might assume. The inspiration was from only one source.

Yet it must be recognised that, to a certain degree, the Republic had greatness thrust upon it. The immediate hand of Bonaparte in shaping the career of the United States has perhaps never been fully realised. The sudden decision of Easter night, 1803, in the palace of St. Cloud, was the actual conferring of empire upon the United States. Without the middle slice of the continent the Republic could never have reached the Pacific. With this vast section of superlative fertility, natural accessibility, and boundless mineral wealth, the Republic became a land of promise to attract millions upon millions of Europeans who, after the Napoleonic wars, began to come in increasing numbers, seeking liberty and competence. Compared with the broad vision of the American statesmen, the opportunism of Bonaparte makes a poor figure. Few blunders that he committed betray his political limitations more clearly. While revivals of mediaeval empire and spectacular military exhibitions absorbed his imagination, he let slip for a song a richer empire than he ever governed in Europe. He exaggerated the danger of its being seized by England. He might have met the first American overtures; he might have guaranteed the

United States forever an egress into the Gulf of Mexico; he might have played upon the French proclivities of the American Republicans; he might have won an alliance, or at least a national friendship, which England would have been slow to offend. He had just gained by the treaty with Spain a greater domain than his armies were ever to conquer; and this, before France realised what she possessed, he signed away in a panic for the gamble of a war.

Jefferson's first term was an extraordinary success. He reaped from the sowing of Washington, Hamilton, and Adams; but his own humanitarianism and his own subtle supremacy were vital contributions which the new nation could ill have afforded to miss at this period of its growth. He was like a wise guardian; he let the child grow, removing the burdens of over-government, while he gave kindly administration to its affairs.

But faith in him was far from universal. One powerful class were his rabid enemies—the New England clergy. They associated him with atheism, Thomas Paine, and the excesses of the French Revolution. In their eyes, he never did a good thing. The story is that one divine refused to baptise an infant with the heathenish name of Thomas Jefferson. Naturally he reciprocated this dislike, and considered Puritanism the curse of New England.

Jefferson entertained no love for the Federalist judges. He thought they had been arrogant and partisan. Also, they were antagonistic to him. He personally resented Adams's closing appointments of judges,—as he once found a way of remarking graciously to Mrs. Adams during some correspondence which tested his amicability. He came to the con-

clusion that the partisan attitude of the judiciary required a salutary rebuke, and no less a personage than a prominent justice of the Supreme Court was selected for impeachment. Justice Chase was a venerable and honoured man, having been one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. During Adams's administration he had, in the convicting of certain persons under the Sedition Law, shown a bitter zeal which Jefferson and his friends regarded as a misdemeanor. This might have been forgotten had he not accentuated the recollection by vehement criticisms of the present administration. The offensive Justice was accordingly haled before the bar of the Senate, at the instance of John Randolph, to answer charges of official misdemeanors. The pliant Senate, however, was in this case more judicial and conservative than the advisers of the administration. The accused Justice was ably defended. The prosecution was unpopular, and the idea of ousting a distinguished member of the bench on questionable charges was distasteful. When Jefferson saw this temper, he shrewdly decided not to use the party whip; and the brunt of the defeat, as well as the responsibility for the proceedings, was allowed to fall upon Randolph. The impeachment was not sustained, but the lessons to the different departments of government were wholesome; the judiciary learned to be more sensitive in its abstention from partisanship, while on the other hand, the executive and legislative branches got new light on the independence of the Supreme Court.

A marked feature of this trial was the dignity and precise justice of its presiding officer, Aaron Burr, the Vice-President of the United States. This ruler

of the high court of impeachment was but recently returned from an exile into which he had been driven by the popular abhorrence of his part in the duel with Hamilton. Burr had become a political bankrupt. He had alienated Jefferson by juggling with the Federalists in 1800. He had subsequently been scorned by Hamilton for his willingness to make a compact with the secession Federalists; and holding Hamilton responsible for his general collapse, he challenged him to a duel,—Hamilton's rough handling of his character being used as the occasion. Hamilton fell, mortally wounded, at the first shot, and Burr was pursued by loud and universal execration.

This untimely taking-off of the most brilliant man of that renowned period has never ceased to be shocking. Hamilton was but forty-seven, and a man of such versatility that riper years could not have failed to increase his powers. He was illustrious in his profession, and perhaps to that would more and more have devoted himself. For it is a curious fact of the history of that time, that the men whom Jefferson superseded never enjoyed another hour either of national place or national influence. They were politically dead when Jefferson became dominant. It was this complete shelving which embittered the rest of John Adams's life. Hamilton experienced the same popular setting aside; but other paths of promise lay ahead of him when Burr's bullet stopped the rich and spirited life.

In good season before the election of 1804, a constitutional amendment had been proposed by Congress, and carried by the State legislatures which directed electors to name specifically President and Vice-President in their ballots, thus forever avoid-

ing the predicament of 1800. Jefferson had been renominated by the Republican caucus, consisting of members of Congress. With him was associated George Clinton, of New York State, as Vice-President. Political opposition was so powerless that the autumn election of 1804 meant 162 electoral votes for Jefferson and Clinton against 14 for Pinckney and King, the Federalist candidates.

CHAPTER V.

THREATENINGS OF WAR.

Despite the vehement opposition and the too frequent slanders of the cultured and conservative class, the votes of the masses had decided that Jefferson's experiment in government should continue. From the light of the past it was all wrong, said American imitators of Old World ways; as for this new light—faith in man, the individual—which Jefferson was throwing ahead, there was no precedent for steering thus illumed.

In his second inaugural speech, Jefferson declared that peace and prosperity united the States, that the national treasury overflowed, and that this happy condition was a demonstration of the success of the proposition with which his party came into power; the proposition that freedom of discussion, unaided by power, was sufficient for the propagation and protection of truth, and that a government conducting itself in the true spirit of the Constitution, with zeal and purity, and doing no act which it would be unwilling the whole world should witness, could not be written down by falsehood and defamation.

Such over-confidence was to receive many checks during his second administration. He had yet to realise that fine theories and "a passion for peace" could not control the habits of nations. That he never fully learned the craft of obvious politics, that he never surrendered his transcendental views, goes

far to make accountable the looming of this figure among the presidents.

Before Congress met at the close of 1805, unpleasant foreign relations had multiplied. With the cession of Louisiana France had passed over to the United States the boundary disputes with Spain. Bonaparte became Napoleon I. in 1804, and now, successful in his wars, with crowns to give away, he did not look back with any complacency upon that affair of his necessity, which had robbed France. He had promised Livingston and Monroe to help their government to procure peaceably the Floridas from Spain; but now he was allied to that power, and counseled its stiff claim to all it could hold of its old possession. His influence was at once felt. Spain sent troops and colonists to make establishments on the Mobile Bay and other places west of New Orleans, on the Gulf of Mexico. She repelled any proposal to sell her American territory.

Jefferson disliked Napoleon's despotic assumption, and felt that a war might be necessary if the Emperor, through Spanish encroachments, tried to dictate to the United States. Yet he favoured pacific measures first and always. While Napoleonic wars were tearing in pieces other nations, he believed his own country might bide at its industries and grow rich and powerful. Moreover, the chances of war abroad might give to the United States another Louisiana opportunity to acquire contiguous territory.

But the way of neutrality was hard in those days, particularly on the high seas. England was bluff and denied the American right to neutrality. After the battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805, she was undisputed on the sea. She decided to force the United States to take part with her or let American

commerce suffer the consequences. On no side did Jefferson's peace proclivities and thrifty non-partisan course meet the appreciation it deserved. The bloody strife which stirred that decade did not accord with his science of government. He was required to trim his sails to suit foreign winds.

Consequently, when Congress met, heavily Republican, the President had many things to tell it; and there were numerous secret sessions and communications. The unfriendliness of Spain demanded attention. A private message to the House was intended to suggest covertly the desirability of an appropriation to be put in his hands, as means for the purchase of territory from Spain. This led to a noisy defection by John Randolph, the spoiled child of Republicanism, as he has been called. For what seemed a freak, he gave up his majority leadership, and with a small following began a malignant opposition to the administration, which strengthened the Federalists without destroying the Republican majority. This faction was called "Quids." Jefferson, however, got his appropriation of two millions of dollars.

In another special message Jefferson laid bare the case with Great Britain. The British were capturing, plundering, and sinking American vessels, on the ground that they were carrying contraband of war. Moreover, no satisfactory arrangement could be made in regard to the impressment of American seamen. It was stated in the course of the House debate that from 2,500 to 3,000 of the country's best sailors were thus held. This impressment of seamen was an indignity long borne, but never with any feeling but wrath. England claimed, once a citizen always a citizen; British deserters and the sons of Revolution-

ary fathers were thus in one category, and to impress them was a business of force, both in British and neutral ports and upon the high seas.

As a mercantile means of retaliation, Congress passed a bill desired by Jefferson, forbidding the importation of certain specified articles of British production. Even this mild act was not to be immediately effective and was subject to suspension. Jefferson did suspend it, when Mr. Fox became prime minister after Pitt's death. He was then hopeful that the new ministry would disavow the measures of its predecessors, and "come to just arrangements."

The treasonable machinations of Aaron Burr, and his subsequent trial before the Chief Justice, formed a striking episode of Jefferson's second administration. It was of small national import, yet it has been perennially interesting to those curious concerning instances of mental and moral obliquity. Indeed, Burr's whole career is a character-study scarcely rivalled by any creation of the realistic romancer. Well born, of manners like Chesterfield, calculated to win ever fresh admiration from new people,—this man of intellectual address and personal fascination was a simpleton in the art of well-doing. His acquaintances were always finding him out; his political party and his country found him out; he was driven from England; he was under police surveillance in Paris; he died in his own city, New York, a pauperised old man. He appeared to go down hill with as much cunning purpose, and at times with more *eclat*, than had marked his way up to rivalship with Jefferson.

Burr's career in the East had ended with his defeat for the governorship of the State of New York, and his killing of Hamilton, which was consequent on that

defeat. He had no hope left of ever being chief of a Northern Confederacy. But he was soon to plot for another empire in the valley of the Mississippi, which should also split the Union. He set out to identify himself with the malcontents of the Southwest, travelled across the mountains to Pittsburg, and then down the Ohio River. During this trip he was the guest of Andrew Jackson, the future president, then a young man of public promise, who was certainly loyal. He also visited at St. Louis General Wilkinson, the commander of the army, who was vain, short of money, and possibly restive. When he departed, Wilkinson sent with him down the Mississippi to New Orleans, a complimentary escort of a sergeant and ten men.

This city of New Orleans was an adventurer's paradise, foreign and revolutionary. The visit here was a reconnoissance and a time of plotting. From this center his ambition reached out to wrest Texas and Mexico from Spanish rule, and to offer them as bribes to the States and Territories on the Ohio and the Mississippi, for their separation from the Atlantic states. He wanted only money and a few boats to blockade the port. For all conditions of men he had all sorts of magic blandishments.

When Burr returned to Philadelphia and Washington, he found that his many confidants had babbled. Nevertheless he kept on scheming and tempting, undisturbed, until with a few hot adherents he again set out in August, 1806, for a chimerical conquest. Jefferson had been aware of Burr's manoeuvres, but he did not see fit to treat them seriously till October of this year, when reports from various sources caused him to send to the Ohio region an agent to spy. The

expedition was apparently forming, for several boats were being built on Blennerhasset's Island in the Ohio; weapons and provisions were being collected; and enlisted men were gathering there. Andrew Jackson wrote to the Governor of Orleans territory, saying, "There is something rotten in the State of Denmark"; and General Wilkinson, once tempted, now no longer temporising, marched promptly to occupy New Orleans and put the city under martial law. On November 27 the President issued a proclamation of warning, which was posted throughout the West. From Pittsburg to New Orleans regulars and militia were ordered to seize everything connected with Burr's expedition. The chief conspirator, apparently unconscious of the chase, proceeded southward, here and there joined by followers, until there was a small flotilla with nearly a hundred men. When he reached the Territory of Mississippi he first read the President's proclamation, and he there learned, too, of Wilkinson's military occupation of New Orleans. He comprehended that the game was lost; his dream of audacious imperialism, suggested by Bonaparte's meteoric career, was dissolved. He instantly disbanded his expedition and fled to Alabama. There he was discovered and arrested by military officers. He was finally taken to Richmond for trial.

This trial was long and involved. Burr was indicted both for treason and for misdemeanour. He was acquitted on the count of treason because no overt act could be proved. The second count failed on the question of jurisdiction, and a new trial for misdemeamour was ordered to be held in Ohio, where the expedition was formed. But he fled his bail and the authorities abandoned the case. Then began his

miserable experiences in foreign countries. The Nemesis of common execration could not be discharged on technicalities.

A singular feature of this trial was the interest taken by Federalists in Burr's acquittal. They claimed he was an innocent man, suffering from the President's personal spite, though it ill became them to take up the cause of Hamilton's slayer. Chief Justice Marshall supported the application for a subpœna ordering the President to attend the trial as a witness, and to bring with him certain letters. The President angrily refused to attend. Jefferson believed Burr to be a base conspirator, and was perhaps too eagerly interested in bringing out the truth at the trial. He had been slow to act in the matter, but having recognised a treasonable undertaking, he wished justice to fall upon the principal. That the man was his personal enemy as well cannot justify the charge of vindictiveness made by his enemies.

With the suppression of this conspiracy, the disaffection in the great region of the Mississippi seemed to melt away.

An important incident in the anti-slavery movement belongs to Jefferson's second administration, during which that cause took one great stride before coming to a long stand-still. The Constitution had contained a provision forbidding any legislative act prohibiting the importation of slaves prior to 1808. On March 2, 1807, an act was passed abolishing forever, after January 1, 1808, the transportation of slaves into this country. This action coincided with the philanthropic movement under Wilberforce and Fox in England. But there it meant more than in the United States. It was practically a foregone con-

clusion that the abolition of the slave trade by parliament was to be the precursor of the eventual abolition of slavery itself throughout the British Empire, accomplished a quarter of a century later. But in the United States the prohibition of the slave trade from over the sea was the ending of a volume, while the abolition of slavery itself was not at that time in any definite consideration whatever.

As domestic merchandise the American slave was to be a marketable commodity for over half a century to come. If he could no longer be imported, natural increase at home was able to supply the demand. Jefferson was not blind to the political, social, and economic dangers of slavery, but his expedients for its removal were visionary and did not press upon the present. He was satisfied to have it disseminate through the new territories, explaining to himself that to scatter it was to weaken it! He was concerned for the protection of the blacks of Africa, but he left for another half century the idea of their protection here.

The last two years of Jefferson's presidency were not to be the peaceful climax he had anticipated. At home, indeed, the signs were all favourable. The national debt was being rapidly diminished. This was partially due to a combination of Hamilton's financial wisdom of construction, to Jefferson's wise and unwise economies of administration, and to Gallatin's skilful management; but it was due most of all to the natural prosperity of the people. Now that the revenues were so easy and plentiful, Jefferson began to depart somewhat from his earlier doctrine that the Federal government's chief function was foreign relations and not internal development; and he proposed the building of great roads and bridges, which should

connect East and West more closely, and open ready passage through the country.

But abroad, the frenzy of the conflict with Napoleon was at odds with the peace and prosperity of the American trade upon the sea. There American commerce met with such rough handling that it went fluttering home to get protection,—a protection which the economic government was unable to give. Armies of unorganised militia and navies of gun-boats were peace preparations which afforded little safety and no prestige to the merchantmen charged by British frigates with carrying contraband of war, or of having British deserters in their crew.

Monroe and Pinckney were in London for the purpose of reaching a satisfactory understanding with the new Fox ministry about these intolerable seizures of American cargoes and impressments of American seamen. The Jay treaty had expired, so that there was now no convention to prevent arbitrary conduct at sea. Diplomacy was the reliance of Jefferson's government for preserving that neutral course to which it religiously adhered; and in diplomacy the President was as courageous and persistent as he was helpless and conciliatory when warlike measures were required. This diplomatic daring has indeed always been characteristic of the United States; it has loved peace; it has seldom been prepared for war; but in its worst military weakness it has never bent in its foreign attitude.

The American ministers in this instance, however, had a stiff task. There was as yet little respect for America in England, and British spirit was lawless towards all who were not in the fight against Napoleon. The English commissioners were agree-

able in their assurances, but their best conditions for a treaty were hard. At last Monroe and Pinckney accepted them as the best they could obtain, and sent the treaty home. Jefferson found it hopelessly bad; it did not even refer to that grievous thing,—the impressment of seamen; it was worse in some respects than the Jay treaty.

So, without consulting the Senate, he sent back the instrument as a laudable essay at adjustment, but nevertheless a failure in meeting certain unalterable demands of the Government. In Europe this refusal of Jefferson was regarded as an audacious bluff on the part of a nation which had no means wherewith to fight for its place on the ocean. In the meantime Fox had died, and Canning, the new Secretary of the Foreign Office, was anything but suave. Monroe and Pinckney were just recovering heart to ask for a renewal of negotiations when a piece of news set London talking.

The surrender of three British deserters who had enlisted on board the United States frigate Chesapeake, had been demanded by the English minister. The government at Washington had refused to give them up on the ground that such an arrangement must be mutual. Further, they were American-born citizens. When the frigate stood out to sea, preparatory to a cruise, on June 22, 1807, the Leopard, a British war-ship, followed her and again made the demand. A cannon-shot across the bows of the unprepared Chesapeake, and then a British broadside, followed the American refusal of the demand. Several were killed and wounded. The American commander struck his flag, and the search was made.

Besides the three enlisted American-born deserters,

one stow-away was found, a genuine English subject. The four men were taken to Halifax, where the Britisher was hanged.

This wanton act of hostility, done on her own seaboard, inflamed the whole country. Jefferson, in writing to General Lafayette, compared the state of feeling to that which the battle of Lexington precipitated. A vessel was at once sent to England to demand reparation, and an early session of Congress was summoned. Without declaring war, all immediate preparations practicable in the country's state of extreme unpreparedness, were set in motion. The President issued a proclamation, declaring the ports to be closed to English ships of war.

Canning, the English Secretary, had formally expressed regret to the American minister when news of the Chesapeake incident came to the British cabinet, and had said; "If the British officers should prove culpable, the most prompt and effective reparation should be afforded to the government of the United States." The President's proclamation, however, gave him the excuse to complain that the retaliation had begun without awaiting explanations; and he forthwith refused to treat the Chesapeake affair in connection with the original question of impressment.

In October, 1807, the King issued a proclamation, instructing his officers "to seize upon, take, and bring away" all his subjects found serving on merchantmen of any foreign power. This seemed to shut the door of negotiation in the face of Monroe, the special commissioner; and, after receiving further notice that the rejected treaty would not be reconsidered, he requested his audience of leave and sailed for America.

Close upon this came the British Orders in Council

and Napoleon's retaliatory Milan Decree. These worked together effectually to cut off the United States from all trade with Europe except England. If American commerce tried to reach the continent save through English clearing ports, it was the lawful prize of the British; and Napoleon's counter decree declared every vessel forfeited which had thus passed through British toll-gates.

Jefferson's comprehension of the gravity of the situation was strangely inadequate. Here was the first gage of war—deliberate and punctiliously careful insults from both England and France. There was no possible evasion of one of the two issues presented,—either a siding with one of the two European powers, or an enforcement of armed neutrality. The first was not to be thought of. As to the other, we shall see what Congress was asked to do.

The hurried session of Congress met on October 26, 1807, with an overwhelming administration majority. The President greeted Congress with a message, which communicated only what was well known; and announced his peremptory note to England, the reply to which must be awaited. This reply arrived the second week in December, bearing the news that a special envoy would come immediately, with power to arrange for the settlement of the Chesapeake imbroglio.

Without awaiting the envoy's arrival Jefferson immediately, on December 18, sent a secret message to Congress, which portrayed the imminent dangers threatening American shipping on all seas, and recommending an inhibition on the departure of all American vessels from the ports of the United States. Momentous as was the scope of this interdict, and unforeseen as might be its eventual effect upon Amer-

ican commerce, the obedient and trustful Congress passed the Embargo Act immediately,—even some of the Federalists supporting it.

The British envoy arrived in January. There was a dramatic disappointment at the start, for of the Orders in Council which had preceded the Embargo Act, the Englishman knew nothing, as the British cabinet had witheld their publication until after his departure. Furthermore, his instructions limited his power of settlement to the one question of the Chesapeake incident, and even that could not be approached until the President had withdrawn the proclamation which forbade American ports to British ships. The larger question of impressment was ruled out. The Secretary of State tried to reach a basis of action by agreeing that the withdrawal of the President's proclamation should bear the same date as the measure of England's reparation. Mr. Rose, the envoy, refused this compromise and soon left for home. The failure had been a foregone conclusion.

The administration was now left without hope of diplomatic concessions from England and with the terrible embargo upon its hands. That this act was a blunder was not obvious at that time. It was a mediæval expedient which had remained in favour even during the eighteenth century. It was not perceived by the Americans that their present dependence upon an extensive commerce would make such a measure ruinous to themselves. They expected, however, that the embargo would be of but a short duration, and they did not question the wisdom of the statesmanship which had imposed it.

The President's arguments in favour of this measure were (1) that since American property and Amer-

ican seamen would be stolen if they sailed the high seas, protection required that both be kept at home; and (2) that since English interests would be damaged by witholding of American products she would soon change her policy of legalized brigandage. He reminded the country that the American farmers could live without English trade; that there were others than farmers he seemed to ignore.

If there was any vindication for the embargo, it was either that it afforded a temporary protection to shipping while the government was preparing to safeguard it by armed force; or that in itself it would effect a change in the British attitude. But neither of these things happened. Congress made no serious provision for war. The appropriations were inadequate in every direction. American merchantmen were jailed at their wharfs, while no swift cruisers or line-of-battle ships were built to escort them over the seas. As for England, she never thought of making a concession because of the embargo. The injury she suffered from it was trivial, and her ministers comprehended that the longer the fatuous embargo lasted the more fully was English commerce being relieved from a dangerous rival. As for France, she was not affected by the embargo in any way whatever. The United States was the only sufferer. The prolonged enforcement of this blind act was potent for the ruin of American shipping.

Jefferson's personal relation to the embargo policy is interesting. Years before in his political visions he had disparaged the value of commerce to the growth of a healthy nation. Now, without intending it in the least, he delivered the most paralyzing blow that American foreign trade has ever experienced. Again,

his theory of government was that that is best which governs least. But in this interdict the extreme democrat adopted a measure of extreme paternalism, though he would assuredly have resented the imputation of inconsistency. It is another human instance of the way in which the march of imperious events may carry the honestest believer of *laissez faire* into a despotic interference with business. But Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana had already proved him capable of those sovereign acts of sweeping power which seem to belong to great democratic leaders.

Jefferson was not responsible for the miscarriage of his scheme as a peaceful agency to convert England. But he was open to blame for not preparing the nation for the war which he acknowledged must be the next step, for Congress was submissive to every recommendation he made. When that body assembled for its last session during his administration, in November, 1808, it responded to his message, endorsed the Embargo and passed a bill for its stricter enforcement.

But the discontent of the country had grown too loud to be ignored. Insurrection and nullification were threatening in New England. The President himself grew unnerved. He was disappointed and frightened. He seemed mentally and perhaps physically unequal to striking out in a new policy. So near the end of his administration he wished to devolve the responsibility for the next measures upon Congress and upon his own successor. Congress rather promptly did its part and passed a bill to terminate the embargo, March 4, 1809. It had been in force for fifteen months,—far too long for an experiment and far too short to weary out English endurance, or to equal the dignity of the Colonial prohibition of tea before the Revolution.

Jefferson's public career was now at an end. On the Fourth of March, 1809, at the age of sixty-five, and after forty years of the most distinguished public service, he yielded the presidency to his friend, the Secretary of State, James Madison.

In the perspective of history his laying down of office appears gloomy. The failure of the embargo was more pregnant with disaster than was apprehended at the time. There was the looming shadow of war which he had been unable to avert and was unwilling to prepare for. For the disasters which were to attend American arms Jefferson's boldness in diplomacy and weak economy in military preparation were together responsible.

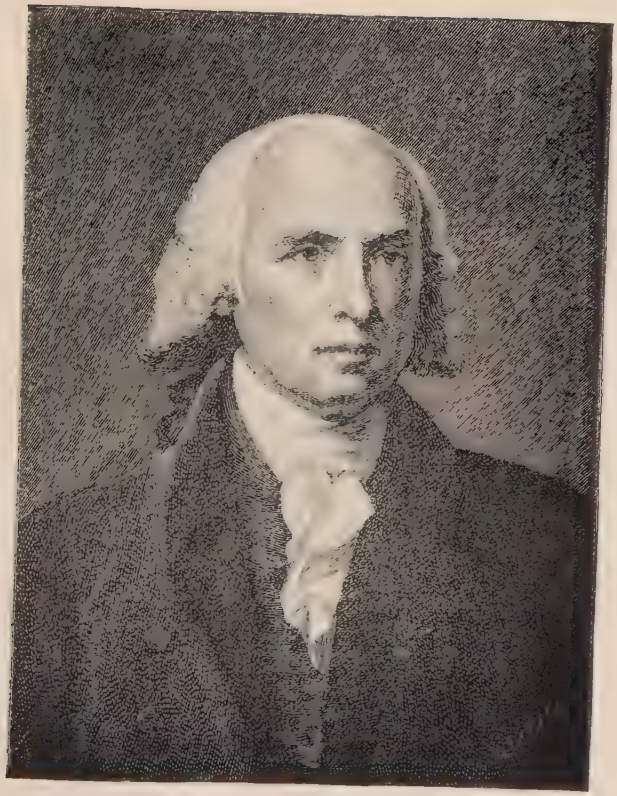
But no shadow appeared to rest on the retiring President. His prestige was unimpaired; there was no personal disaffection in his great party, and he had been urged to accept a third term. He gave up the executive office with a popularity and with a dominant party influence perhaps unequalled.

He at once took up his residence at Monticello, his old and beloved home. Thence for a time his influence was still directly felt in the councils of his successor, whom he had virtually named. His satisfaction was the more complete because he knew that Madison, who had never diverged from his chief's opinions, was devoted to the further elaboration of his democratic-republican policy.

Monticello became the resort of affectionate pilgrims from all sections of the country, and a lavish hospitality was offered to these visitors. The aged statesman never relaxed his intimate interest in public affairs. Happily removed from executive responsibility, he watched the war of 1812 with optimism.

The question of slavery, which the Missouri Compromise of 1820 patched up for a time, he regarded with heaviness of heart, as he began to foresee the fatal division that belonged to a later day.

His very last years were saddened by financial difficulties. His once comfortable estate had been diminished by the scrupulous honesty with which he paid the British creditors of his wife's property. His domain had further suffered by the ravages of British soldiery. After his retirement his open hospitality made Monticello an inn at which no guest asked for a reckoning. At times fifty beds were made ready for guests. Only a princely fortune could maintain this prodigality. The estate became engulfed in debts which it could never pay. Finally, when the old statesman's financial crisis and pitiful embarrassment became generally known, private subscriptions poured in upon him to a degree which saved Monticello and enabled the man who had spent his fortune freely for the State, in her hour of distress, to pass his remaining days in comfort and to die soothed by familiar scenes. It was on the Fourth of July, 1826, exactly fifty years from the day when that brilliant Declaration of Independence, which he had penned, was signed, that he died. On that same day, a few hours later, John Adams, his old friend, chief, and defeated rival, also died, with the whisper, "Thomas Jefferson still survives."



JAMES MADISON.

PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON.

(TWO ADMINISTRATIONS, 1809-1817.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE POLITICAL HEIR OF JEFFERSON.

In assuming the presidency, Madison appeared to come into his own, perhaps more than any other elected chief of a nation. He was the legatee of Jefferson's immense personal influence; he was the enlightened apostle of Jefferson's creed, and he was moreover a cultivated statesman. His ambition had been steady, with patience and sure step. His party gave him what he had a right to expect.

There were, however, two other prominent candidates: George Clinton, the illustrious New Yorker, and Vice-President under Jefferson, who had been voted for at each previous election and who might have hoped to step from vice-presidency to presidency, as his predecessors had done; and James Monroe, a Virginian of distinction and ambition, and a perspicacious statesman, whose clearness of view as to foreign relations might be especially advantageous now. Monroe's aspiration for the presidency had been encouraged by the disaffected John Randolph; and it required all of Jefferson's conciliatory address

to keep his younger friend from revolt, or at least from a sensitive coldness towards himself and the new administration.

But it seemed fitting that Jefferson's eldest political son should succeed him. The most real opposition to the arrangement was the spreading alarm at the consequences of the administrative policy. That was still non-intercourse, embargo, and no preparation for war. These principles were pretty sure to be instilled into Madison's mind after his long training at Jefferson's side as chief secretary, and it seemed likely that he would observe them. It is quite clear that his intentions were to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor; but he was soon swept beyond those worshipful tracks by crowding events and by new influences in Congress. The old order of presidents had indeed passed away. Jefferson, as well as Washington and Adams, belonged to the eighteenth century. The new century began politically when parties in Congress and public opinion assumed that dictatorship which the first three presidents had wielded as a matter of course.

The War of 1812 marks an important epoch in American history. The long diplomatic embroilments with both the British and the French resulted in a more or less unsatisfactory war with England. Yet the apparently unsuccessful diplomacy and the inconclusive war led eventually to a full recognition of American international rights. Madison's presidency of eight years covered this critical period. Nevertheless, strangely perhaps, the chief personal interest which the man himself stirs is in his earlier record, when he was helping to hold together the unjointed Confederacy, framing a Constitution, and working to create a sense of nationality.

When Madison, in his old age at Montpellier, was solicited for facts and notes regarding his life, he gave in reply a statement of such simplicity as to be almost colourless. He sent the genealogy of the Madison family, and concluded the slender sketch in his letter thus: "I need scarcely remark that a life which has been so much a public life must, of course, be treated in the public transactions in which it was involved, and that the most important of these are to be found in documents already in print, or soon to be."

Nothing appetizing held out to the biographer in this,—a life done up in documents and in public transactions. This is, indeed, a life of Madison in one word. But what documents, and how significant the public transactions!

To the genealogy, which he sanctioned as "made out by a member of the family," is added the modest information that his "ancestors on both sides were not among the most wealthy of the country, but in independent and comfortable circumstances." The evidence of this ease in condition which most concerned Madison was the fact that he had leisure and was sent to college. In 1769 this meant almost certain intellectual distinction and a public career.

The parents who had this faith in education were James Madison and Nelly Conway, and their eldest child, James, was born on March 16, 1751. Thus he was nineteen years younger than Washington and eighteen years older than Napoleon. At the termination of his college studies (which included Hebrew) at Princeton, he went home to teach his younger brothers and sisters; for himself, to dabble in law and in divinity, and to struggle with the depression of an ill body. This depression must have been a seri-

ous weight, to cause him at twenty-one to write to a friend, "I am too dull and infirm now to look out for extraordinary things in this world, for I think my sensations for many months have intimated to me not to expect a long or healthy life, though it may be better with me after some time; but I hardly dare expect it, and therefore have little spirit or elasticity to set about anything that is difficult in acquiring and useless in possessing after one has exchanged time for eternity."

Madison's early turn of mind to religion and his study of Christianity were not narrowing. He became intolerant of religious intolerance. For a time the sin in Virginia against the liberty of conscience in the exercise of religion seemed to him more crying than the political wrongs of the Colonies. Not long afterwards he was able to put himself publicly on record against the dangers of Church Establishment. This was soon after his "first entrance into public life," as he calls his election to the Virginia Convention of 1776. In that revolutionary body he began to be a framer of constitutions, as he belonged to the committee appointed to draw up a Bill of Rights and a State Constitution for the Colony. During the discussions of the Bill of Rights, Madison advanced the then radical doctrine that the application of the word "toleration" to the religious relations of men was an impertinence; that no class of religionists could possess the right to tolerate the religious beliefs of others. He demanded accordingly that Virginia should declare that all men were entitled to the full and free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and he furthermore maintained that no class of men ought on ac-

count of religion to be invested with peculiar emoluments or privileges.

It has been said that Madison was never a young man. In the dire and testing days between 1775 and 1783, one old young man was more to be desired than two young old men. Of the latter there was the usual supply,—undisciplined, inconsequent, and indiscreet. But young shoulders bearing an old head were a strong support in the uncertain Confederacy, a salutary influence in time of peril which a patriotic people were happily able to appreciate. Temperament denied to Madison the buoyancy natural to most youths even of revolutionary times; and once seriously employed in the affairs of the country, obviously there was ahead for the conscientious American nothing but work and increasing responsibility. Men of Madison's kind had to come forward, like elder brothers, to be sponsors for the ungovernable Confederate brood.

Perhaps if Madison had not been set to State business before his health grew well established, there might have been a period of ampler personal life than he ever enjoyed. But a reflection of this sort, though friendly, savours of ingratitude to one of the country's most devoted makers.

To the gloomy Continental Congress of 1780, at the darkest period of the War of Independence, Madison was sent. He was then twenty-nine years of age, perhaps the youngest member of the body; for Hamilton, who was several years his junior, was not yet seated. A letter which he wrote from Philadelphia to Jefferson, who was then badly placed as Governor of Virginia, tells a dismal story of the way things were going. He says: "Our army threatened with an immediate alternative of disband-

ing or living on free quarter; the public treasury empty; public credit exhausted,—nay, the private credit of purchasing agents employed, I am told, as far as it will bear; Congress complaining of the extortion of the people; the people of the improvidence of Congress; and the army of both; our affairs requiring the most mature and systematic measures, and the urgency of occasions admitting only of temporary expedients, generating new difficulties; Congress recommending plans to the several States for execution, and the States separately rejecting the expediency of such plans, whereby the same distrust of concurrent exertions that has damped the ardour of patriotic individuals must produce the same effect among the States themselves; an old system of finance discarded as incompetent to our necessities; an untried and precarious one submitted; and a total stagnation in prospect between the end of the former and the operation of the latter. These are the outlines of the picture of our public situation. I leave your own imagination to fill them up."

By nature Madison was more interested in ways and means for carrying on the war than in the military operations themselves. Legislative patriotism was a sharp need of the hour, and it absorbed him to the exclusion of that perfervid interest which the fortunes of the army excited throughout the land. His letters discuss wisely all questions national and international, but they contain no accounts of marches or battles.

But the problems of the Continental legislator and of the Continental army were inseparable in the last years of the war. They brought on the struggle for a general revenue. The murmurs of discontent from an ill-fed, ill-clothed and unpaid army grew

louder as peace approached. Public creditors of every sort began to clamour to Congress for their pay in good money. Congress was beholden to individuals, to the soldiers, to the various States, and to France and Holland. It had been authorised by the States to hire their fighters for them, and to make these indispensable loans; but no power had been given it to tax the people for a revenue to meet such expenses. Its credit was so poor that the debased paper currency in circulation was described in a phrase which circulated with it, as "not worth a continental."

A plan for relieving the urgency was proposed. Congress was to be authorised to put a national duty on importations. Rhode Island dissented from this, and, following her perverse example, Virginia then recalled her previous assent. This was a blow to those who thought outside of State interests, and believed that to the Union must be given certain absolute powers. Madison was heartily grieved at the course of his own State. Here was a new contest, on before that with England was over; a league of States opposed to a republic of United States; the idea of a State sovereignty set up against that of a compact union; State politics versus Continental politics; the centrifugal force opposed to the centripetal force. Washington at the head of the army, and Madison in his serious congressional work, stood together on the side of a better union and of more power for the central government.

In January, 1783, a cessation of hostilities was declared and a provisional treaty signed. John Adams and Benjamin Franklin represented the United States. England seemed almost immediately to regret any collective treaty, for she saw, or fancied she

saw, division and anarchy growing among the States. If she could make her own terms with separate States there was small international respect due to the loose bond which united them. Fox said, "a definite treaty with the United States was perfectly superfluous." The King had declared to Fox: "That revolted State certainly for years cannot establish a stable government." It had been further prophesied that the Americans would remain a disunited people until the end of time. Thus, in spite of Shelbourne and his colleagues, who would have revised the system of commerce so as to include America in family mutuality, the British policy towards the new commonwealth began at once to be restrictive in trade and provocative in spirit. It assumed that division among the States could be fostered, and that the weary country had not enough national feeling to retaliate as a unit.

The definite treaty, signed in September, 1783, gave to the American people the enjoyment of independence in peace. They did not get that reciprocity of free trade which they had expected; the "Navigation Act" remained; American shipping was excluded from the British West Indies; American-built ships were no longer to be used in British commerce, and European seamen were forbidden to serve in the American marine. The English troops evacuated New York, but they did not quit the North and Northwest posts. These handicaps were disheartening, but the commercial straits which they produced served in the end to pull together for common good the yet divided sovereignties.

Peace brought the United States overtures from foreign powers. Its accomplished minister at Paris met these advances promptly. Sweden was the first

country to offer her friendship. Spain, however, was so situated as to feel a dread of displacement, and, as a neighbour to this new Union, she was on guard. It was noticeable that France had not her old ardour for the Republic. Now that England's hands were off, she was not anxious that it should strengthen itself to a formidable degree.

The prospect of disarmament did not brighten the spirits of the Continental army. It protested more loudly than ever against the supineness of the Federal government. It was vindictive towards the stubborn States that opposed its redress through a federal revenue. There were financiers who intimated that this force, still in arms, might, to the good of all, back its complaints by coercion, until the States yielded to Congress the means of help. For here was the real rub,—should the States allow a Continental revenue? Should Congress have the right to acquire a permanent national income?

Madison wrote to Randolph: "The idea of erecting our national independence on the ruins of public faith and national honour must be horrid to every mind which retains either honesty or pride. Is a Continental revenue indispensably necessary for doing complete justice to the public creditors? This is the question. A punctual compliance by thirteen independent governments, with periodical demands of money from Congress, can never be reckoned upon with certainty. The Articles of Confederation authorise Congress to borrow money. To borrow money, permanent and certain provision is necessary; and, as they cannot be made in any other way, a general revenue is within the spirit of the Confederation. Congress is already invested by the States with constitutional authority over the purse as well as the

sword. A general revenue would only give this authority a more certain and equal efficacy."

Arthur Lee was the champion of the contrary doctrine. He said: "The purse ought never to be put in the same hand with the sword. I will be explicit; I would rather see Congress a rope of sand than a rod of iron."

Washington's joy over peace did not diminish his concern to get the powers of Congress enlarged to suit a continent. He wrote feelingly to Hamilton: "No man in the United States is or can be more deeply impressed with the necessity of a reform in our present Confederation than myself. No man, perhaps, has felt the bad effects of it more sensibly; for to the defects thereof, and want of power in Congress, may be justly ascribed the prolongation of the war and consequently the expenses occasioned by it. More than half the perplexities I have experienced in the course of my command, and almost the whole of the difficulties and distress of the army, have had their origin here." He presented to Congress the claims of the "patriot army" with eloquent warmth. He wrote to the committee: "The financier will take his own measures, but this sum must be procured."

But there was no revenue, and public credit was gone. France and Holland began to press their claims for interest on loans. Congress had to act. Madison prepared a plan for getting the needed revenue. It included duties on imports and demands on the States, apportioned according to population. He proposed the compromise rule for counting slaves, by which they were rated as five to three. At that time this rule for the census was for the purposes of taxation only, and it appeared to satisfy all sections alike. The measure of expediency was carried in Congress,

though opposed by Hamilton. He had no faith in fresh legislation, which, he felt, was in reality no more than a suggestion which the States could follow or not, as they chose. Madison wrote the appeal of Congress to the States.

The army disbanded and went back to their long neglected avocations, with promises in place of money. That they were patient patriots may be ascribed to Washington's influence. He pleaded for their distress, but he used his personal popularity to the last degree to persuade them back to unarmed citizenship. Then he sent his circular to the governor of every State; he requested that it should be made known to their respective legislatures, and begged the people to take it as his "legacy" which he gave to them on quitting military service for private life. He had no policy except for the increase of union. He declared that it was his "wish to see an energy given to the Federal Constitution by a convention of the people." This was soon to pass into a popular demand—a revision of the Constitution by a Continental convention. The people of the United States could alone place Congress on a proper footing.

After a term of three years in the ineffectual Congress, Madison went home to Virginia. Here in the Assembly was quite as honourable and influential a part for one who wished to help brace the Union. A man who had served the United States in Congress returned to his own State affairs with "an indisputable bias" towards increased Federal powers, yet with that broader view which was sure to dominate.

Madison had both the bias and the perspective. He saw that the Union was threatened by the anarchy of State selfishness, and he saw ruin for one and all in a lack of commercial unity. He felt that the cen-

tral government must assume control, at least in commerce.

But he went back to a State where each planter made his own deal with London, both in exporting and importing, sending and receiving at his own little jetty. How were these isolated, self-sufficient, small proprietors to be got to see the better way of large markets with uniformity of prices through competition? Madison made an endeavor in this direction in the Port Bill. This bill confined the commerce of the State to two or three ports. But the innovation was so unpopular that port after port was added to the list, in effect defeating the object of the bill.

At last, in connection with the question of a maritime law between Virginia and Maryland, Madison was able to secure the passage of a bill which reached far beyond the Potomac. It provided for the appointment of commissioners from Virginia to meet commissioners from all the other States, who should confer together concerning a uniform system in their commercial relations, and report the result of the conference to their several States.

In September, 1786, commissioners from five States came together at Annapolis. They were too few in number to constitute a representative convention, yet in determination they were dauntless. Madison and his companions from Virginia were the agitators. Alexander Hamilton, from New York, was there. He drafted the address which was finally adopted. It again summoned the States to meet. It set forth more clearly and with broader significance the object of the national rally, naming a new date and place for a second convention.

The States appealed to were slow and not at first favourable. Madison spoke boldly in his own legis-

lature, inspiring it to be the first to respond by the selection of delegates. These were Madison, Randolph and Mason, with Washington at their head. Other States followed such lead with varying degrees of reluctance. Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts gave law-abiding citizens there a shock which was salutary, and the recoil towards the authority of government extended beyond New England.

Congress, a shadow itself, assented to the new scheme for giving substance and sustenance to the Confederacy. The people themselves, severely tested by the critical years which followed the separation from England, awaited the convention at Philadelphia anxiously, but with a new thrill of hope.

Two Virginians gave to the coming convention their serious consideration. Washington studied deeply and consulted widely; while of Madison it may be said that he reached his highest excellence in the preparation for that memorable meeting. He got ready in advance the outlines of a comprehensive constitution, for his own use and to guide its deliberations. He was prepared for this task by an early and late study of republican and federal government, and by his unbroken experience in high public service. This experience had acquainted him with all the difficulties of the problem before him. He was convinced that it could never be solved unless the Nation was placed supreme by all the people, yet he desired equally for the States a distinct though subordinate authority. These contending ideas he endeavoured to embody harmoniously.

In a sketch of Madison's career, it has seemed worth while to follow the slow steps which necessity coerced the reluctant States to take. They led to the Constitutional convention at Philadelphia of May, 1787.

There Madison did a prodigious share of work among those who met "to devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the Constitution of the Federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union." His notes taken during the convention are a complete history of the Constitution.

The development of the written Constitution belongs to American soil. The Mayflower contract, the "Fundamental Orders of Connecticut," as well as the royal charters of the Colonies, were written documents which prescribed legislation, and they led the way to State constitutions after independence. Thus the people generally were used to binding agreements which tested the law in the courts. The Federal Constitution was the offspring of these State constitutions, and the general government was modeled after the State governments, although the basic principle of the State democracies—representation according to population was bitterly opposed when applied to State suffrage in Congress.

The convention was a meeting of fifty-four remarkable men, "demi-gods" Jefferson called them. Some of them had sat in the Stamp Act Congress of 1765, and had been signers of the Declaration of Independence. They began to assemble on the 14th of May, and they continued in consultation for four months. From the closed doors, behind which they deliberated with wide difference of opinion but with singleness of heart, the Constitution was issued, a complete document ready for vote by the States. From Maine to Georgia the patriots came, for the most part on horseback. Madison was the first man to reach Philadelphia, and for some time the delegates from Virginia and Pennsylvania waited for a

quorum of States to be present. At length business could begin; Washington was elected to the chair, and the discussions of that long summer commenced.

The leading minds of the convention, outside of Virginia, were Franklin, Hamilton, Robert and Gouverneur Morris, James Wilson, Elbridge Gerry, Rufus King, the two Pinckneys, William Johnson, John Dickinson, Oliver Ellsworth and Roger Sherman. Jefferson was at his mission in Paris, and had no share in this deliberative work. It was probably fortunate that his dominant temperament could not act upon those who were already his followers. Visionary democracy was not for this hour. Madison was still a moderate Federalist, and the ideas of moderate Federalism got their just place in the scheme of the first national republic.

The burning question was how much of the power should be vested in the States, and how much in a general government. Compromises had to be effected between Imperialists on the one hand and extreme Democrats on the other, in order to make a solid constructive work out of independent and repellent parts.

Virginia was in the front. Madison's exhaustive outline of a constitution appears in Washington's own transcription. It became the working basis for the Virginia delegation, and through it was presented to the convention to be taken up proposition by proposition. A comparison between this outline and the eventual Constitution shows the debt of suggestion owed to the studious labour of Madison. His position was advanced and his advocacy was bold. His resolutions embraced a plan of popular suffrage, by which each State should be represented in Congress; two branches of Congress, the members of one to be elected by the people, the members of the other by

the State legislatures; the election of an executive head by the national legislature; a national judiciary; and a guaranty of republican government and a right to the soil to each State.

Such was the contribution of Madison to the Constitution. He perhaps did more to give it shape than any other man. The programme he submitted was modified by the views of the convention, but the radical idea that the national legislature should represent the people of the nation and be sovereign, came from him through the Virginia resolutions. His advanced position was also the *sine qua non* of all the large States; they were immovably determined never to submit to a sovereign Congress in which the smallest State should have equal power with the largest, whereby insularity and narrow prejudice would have even voice with expanding interests of commerce and population.

Madison's pen was soon engaged in doing another large work. When the new Constitution was making friends and enemies before the people of the States, Hamilton conceived the idea of setting forth its meaning in a series of reasonable essays. He secretly asked Madison and Jay to help along his plan by contributing papers giving their reasons for the adoption of that instrument, which they knew perfectly and believed in thoroughly. They agreed, and quietly the "Federalists" began to appear, three or four numbers each week during that winter, and with more or less regularity for nearly a year. They were, in the agitation of that time, only campaign pamphlets, appearing in the Packets and Gazettes of the day. They could not have had the weight which a century has given to them in their collected form as the best interpretations of the Constitution. Hamilton and

Madison had precise information to give from fresh memories and full private notes, so that their contribution to the history and import of the document is invaluable. The "Federalist" has undisputed rank among English political treatises.

In the Virginia convention which assembled the next June to pass upon the new scheme, Madison was conspicuous. He had done the most original and the boldest work of his life, and he stood before his own State in a masterly attitude. His influence was potent in carrying through the adoption of the Constitution, a hard-won triumph. Thus, when not yet forty years old, his best achievements were before his country. Henceforth his course was to be, in a way, a retracing of steps, conscientiously performed, but lacking in the force which had been his for the brief season when he aided Washington, Hamilton and Wilson in making the new government fibrous.

Defeated in his aspirations for a seat in the first Senate, Madison was elected by the people of his district to the first House of Representatives. Here he soon felt the dividing influences which were beginning to enter into American politics. Hamilton's bold assertion of the possibilities of strong government under the Constitution made Madison suspicious of his own handiwork. As between the two leading spirits in Washington's cabinet, he leaned from Hamilton towards Jefferson; and as the divergence between Federalists and Republicans became more marked, he found himself an exponent of strict construction of the Constitution. He led in Congress the opposition to Hamilton's funding scheme, to the national bank, and to the whole bold system of finance. Although defeated, he still regarded those plans as perilous and unconstitutional; yet future experience

was to convince him that the first of the measures was salutary; and, strangely enough, after the stress of another war the second was an expedient which his own administration adopted. His personal relations with Washington and Hamilton were scarcely disturbed; Hamilton respected his political intelligence as he never did Jefferson's, and Madison enjoyed the fullest confidence of Washington. Nevertheless, he comprehended his own disharmony with the policy of the Administration, to the extent of declining the mission to France, though it was kept open for him for twelve months; and for the same reason he refused to be Secretary of State upon Jefferson's resignation, to the disappointment of Washington.

In the general election of 1796, which resulted in the presidency of John Adams, he was not returned to Congress. During the four years' presidency of Adams, Madison was in coöperation with Jefferson in fighting the high-handedness of the Administration, and strengthening the sentiments of the new Republican party. He approved Jefferson's Kentucky resolutions against the Alien and Sedition Laws, and rewrote them for use in Virginia. While these maintained all explicit Federal powers granted by the Constitution, they strongly denounced the assumption of implied powers, and they asserted the right of the States to call a halt. Then came into use the two party cries, "freedom of speech" and "liberty of the press." These resolutions of the Virginia legislature were addressed to sister States, but they did not command a general response. In the North they were particularly discredited, and even rebuked.

In support of the positions taken in the resolutions, Madison wrote an elaborate "Report," in which he made an exhaustive and profound argument for the

doctrine of strict construction and States' rights. This paper is one of the most carefully prepared political documents written by any American statesman. Specifically, it was the last word on the issue of the Alien and Sedition Laws, showing convincingly how indefensible they were. After that, little was said in their favour, and they were dropped. The fact is, both sides had gone too far; the Federalists had taken an untenable position, and the Republicans had been too threatening. With judicious consideration, each side receded from its own extreme.

Madison's reactionary course is one of the curiosities of American politics. Previous to the Constitutional convention he had been a most earnest advocate of a strong Federal power. To save the country from anarchy, he had urged provision for a government able to coerce obstinate States if necessary. But when the government was established, he believed he saw forces active which promised to end in monarchy, and he gradually receded from his earlier arguments, until he rivalled Jefferson himself in democratic tenets. It is never wise to offer sweeping generalizations concerning the course of a character; yet it is pertinent to observe in Madison, as in the career of many another statesman, the high tide of aggressive action which occurs in the period of enthusiasms, and the settling to conservatism which follows.

Naturally, Jefferson turned to Madison when he wanted a Secretary of State in the administration which inaugurated the reign of the Republican party. In Jefferson's cabinet there were none of the cross purposes among its members which had existed in the councils of his predecessors. Jefferson, as has been remarked before, knew better than to group dis-

harmonious views in his political family; and Madison was his most devoted disciple. For eight years he occupied this post, and almost retired his own individuality behind the arduous and conscientious performance of its duties.

This unique accord put his activity in an exact parallel with the course of Jefferson's administration, and where this was marked by strength and sagacity, the chief properly got the credit.

There is a singular and interesting contrast between Madison's relations to the two administrations of Washington and Jefferson. The first president carefully consulted with the opposition in Congress, and he depended very largely upon Madison's clearness of mind and sincerity of spirit as the leader of the opposition; and thus the very differences between them are lights upon the high-mindedness of each. Jefferson, on the other hand, was inclined to consult most with those whose views were in accord with his own, and his advisers consequently were men who echoed his theories and could be depended upon for personal loyalty. So, except for the masterly state papers which he wrote from time to time, the eight years of Madison's service in Jefferson's cabinet appear to be of little personal eventfulness.

But Madison's unarrested accord with the administration of his chief seems to have been that which is possible to an independent nature, and it was not interpreted by his party as indicating a lack of personal force. Because he was the best available exponent of the views of the young Republican party, he was a natural choice for its second president. He was nominated by the congressional caucus, although Monroe and Clinton were formidable rivals. In the general election of 1808 a majority of the electors chosen by

the people were favourable to him. The consequent ballot of the electoral college, showed 122 Republican votes for Madison, 6 votes, also Republican, for Clinton; and 47 Federalist votes for Pinckney. In March, 1809, Madison was inaugurated the fourth president of the Republic.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SECOND WAR WITH ENGLAND.

Erskine, the young envoy whom Great Britain had sent to deal with the difficult situation in America, was over zealous for peace. He promised Madison, soon after the inauguration, that the obnoxious orders to the English navy should be recalled. But he did not insist upon all the conditions with which Canning had loaded the proposition. He took liberties with the letter of his instructions in the interests of an amicable settlement. Acting upon his comfortable assurance, the President at once issued a proclamation which reopened free trade with England and her colonies after June 10, 1809. On that day, hundreds of ships, ready and waiting for release, spread their sails for foreign parts. This gave the new administration a decided boom. The brief renewal of commerce was credited to it. Gunboats and embargo had been superseded by peace and free trade.

But both Madison and Erskine were doomed to embarrassment. Canning no sooner heard of the concessions of his minister than he emphatically repudiated them before the House of Commons. He shut more tightly than before those ports which Erskine had agreed to open; and to seal the disavowal he recalled his agent. This repudiation spread dismay along the United States seaboard. England, as an act of indulgence, allowed the ships already voyag-

ing to return unmolested; but she did not revoke her Orders in Council, and it was soon evident that the President's proclamation was commercially worthless. Madison wrote to Jefferson: "Erskine is in a ticklish situation with his government." His own disappointment and mortification had to be concealed while he put his energies to meet again the old difficulty in its new effrontery. He had now to issue a second proclamation, annulling the first and renewing non-intercourse.

Diplomatic dealings with England became of little or no use. Mr. Jackson, who was sent to take Erskine's place, had earned by his course with neutral interests at Copenhagen an unsavoury reputation to a neutral people. Madison, who virtually did the work of the Secretary of State at this time, parried skilfully with the new minister for a short period, but when the latter insinuated that the administration had led Erskine to agree to an arrangement which it knew exceeded his instructions, the President squarely refused to correspond any longer with a minister so ill-intentioned and so adversely instructed. The Senate and the House by their majorities supported Madison's stiff course, but the Federalists made cause with England by accusing the administration of either trickery or imbecility.

Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury, was compelled to take some new measures, and accordingly prepared an American navigation act, which had at least the appearance of helping the dilemma. Congress rejected his bill, and then worried to the close of its session before agreeing to a weak modification of it. This act was only one more of the commercial restrictions by which the United States sought to protect herself against England and France, while

still trying to avert war. Each one had been an unsuccessful experiment. In 1806 there had been partial non-intercourse; in 1807, embargo, with the act of enforcement in 1808; next, total non-intercourse in 1809; and now in 1810 a last attempt to get free trade and neutral rights on the high seas.

By this last act the government abandoned entirely non-intercourse and retaliation for a period continuing until three months after the adjournment of Congress; and at the end of that time the President was authorised to declare the non-intercourse act to be again in force against either England or France, should the decrees of either nation be repealed while those of the other remained in force. The war ships of both nations were still excluded from American waters. This scheme of provisos showed distracted helplessness. Madison found little hope in it. He wrote to Pinckney, his minister in London: "At the next meeting of Congress it will be found, according to present appearances, that instead of an adjustment with either of the belligerents, there is an increasing obstinacy in both; and that the inconveniences of embargo and non-intercourse have been exchanged for the greater sacrifices, as well as disgrace, resulting from a submission to the predatory system in force."

The new policy was at least impartial towards England and France; either one might bid for free trade with America.

Napoleon had refused, prior to this time, to budge from his position that the Milan and Berlin Decrees would fall only when England recalled her Orders in Council. Since Pinckney in London could get no concession as to English blockades, such a reciprocal repeal seemed out of the question. Within a year Napoleon's threats against American trade with the

allies of France had been made good by the seizure of a hundred and fifty ships from the United States in the ports of Naples, of Italy, of Spain, and of Holland, all of which had then come under French control. A confiscation of shipping and cargo had followed, which put millions of dollars at the needy Emperor's disposal. This reckless robbery was declared by the Rambouillet Decree to be just retaliation for the American Non-intercourse Act, which forbade any French ship to enter a port of the United States.

While her venturesome merchantmen were thus at the mercy of lawless belligerents, the United States unexpectedly put forth the timourous act repealing non-intercourse. But, with all its impotence, it put American influence on the market. Napoleon quickly saw that the game was out of his hands unless he seized the advantage of making the first offer. Promises would go a long way. To be sure, England would not be hoodwinked and would not be brought to terms thereby. But the United States could be forced, by her own unique arrangement, to discriminate against England, and the embroilment would grow worse. With instant adaptation, he communicated through his minister to the American ambassador, his pleasure at what Congress had done. He declared that the Milan and Berlin Decrees were revoked and would cease to be operative after the first day of November. Yet this gracious concession was still conditional on England's abandonment of her Orders in Council, and it offered no compensation for French spoliation,—that "indispensable evidence" of her good faith. The communication closed with the bland assurance that "His Majesty loves the Americans. Their prosperity and their commerce enter

into the views of his policy. The independence of America is one of the principal titles of the glories of France."

This Napoleonic move did not affect England. She did not recognize the conditional recall of the decrees made merely by letter. The United States government, however, chose to believe in the Emperor's word. Accordingly, Madison issued a proclamation on the second of November, 1810. It gave England three months in which to reconsider her position towards neutrals. If she retained her hostile edicts, non-intercourse would be revived against her. One declared enemy could not be so irritating as two, undeclared but meanly active. It was easier to accept Napoleon's agile change of face than to confront longer England's impassivity and contempt. Americans resented the insolence of their mother country more than the depredations of their whilom friend. England would not give even a promise; France at least made a pretense. The choice of an enemy was made under the influence of national soreness. The masses of the people were permeated with a very sensitive antipathy towards Great Britain. There was reason enough for the sensitiveness; and yet sensitiveness is rarely a reasonable motive for grave decisions.

When John Randolph, in the next Congress, assailed the war policy of the administration, his nice irony vented itself upon American Anglophobia in words memorable and, to a degree, applicable. "Strange," said he, "that we should have no objection to any other people, civilised or savage! The great autocrat of all the Russias receives the homage of our high consideration. The Dey of Algiers and his divan of pirates are a very civil, good sort of people,

with whom we find no difficulty in maintaining relations of peace and amity. Turks, Jews and infidels, ... barbarians and savages of every clime are welcome to our arms. With chiefs of banditti, negro or mulatto, we can treat and can trade. Name, however, England, and all our antipathies are up in arms against her, against those whose blood runs in our own veins; those in common with whom we can claim Shakespeare and Newton, and Chatham for our countrymen; against our fellow-Protestants, identical in blood, in language, in religion with ourselves; whose form of government is the freest on earth, our own only excepted, and from whom all the valuable parts of even our own are borrowed,—representation, trial by jury, voting the supplies, writ of habeas corpus, our whole civil and criminal jurisprudence."

It was a curious, three-cornered quarrel, in which England was stubborn, Napoleon mischievous, while the United States showed a mixture of shrewdness and ingenuousness wholly her own contribution to diplomacy. As the result, Congress, at the close of its session in March, 1811, was forced to the act of renewing non-intercourse with England, which meant war. Neither England nor the United States were sure that that was what they wanted, while Napoleon was exactly suited.

Josiah Quincy called the whole series of enactments preceding the war "a curious gallimaufry of time present and time future, of doing and refraining to do, of declaration and understanding of English duties and American duties."

In the Spanish colonies revolt was stirring. The old monarchy had gone down, to make room for Napoleon's brother on the throne. The mixed population of West Florida felt the discontent which was

making trouble throughout Spanish America; and in the resulting conflict the revolutionists seized the fort of Baton Rouge, asking protection and recognition from the United States. Madison responded by taking military possession of the east bank of the Mississippi, claiming it for the United States under the Louisiana Purchase title. When revolt and confusion followed in East Florida, the President asked Congress to express itself as disinclined to see the Floridas pass from Spain into the hands of any other foreign power; and also to give authority to occupy the territory, subject to future negotiation, if the local commandant desired the transfer, or if foreign seizure were threatened.

The Territorial legislature was now seeking the admission of Orleans into the Union as a State. The Federalists vehemently opposed the carving of new States out of territory acquired by purchase or conquest; it was unconstitutional and inexpedient; thus the old Union, they further said, would eventually be annexed to an aggregation of foreign States. Quincy declared: "If this bill passes, it is my deliberate opinion that it is virtually a dissolution of this Union; that it will free the States from their moral obligation; and, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some definitely to prepare for a separation, amicably if they can, forcibly if they must." He stated more calmly that "the clause in the Constitution authorising the admission of new States must, from the context, be understood to relate only to the formation of new States within the limits of the Union as then existing." The Republicans upheld the constitutionality of wider admission; treaties, they said, were absolute; Louisiana was acquired by treaty, with the provision that its people should

be taken into the Union as soon as possible. The question seemed vital to the Federalist East. Its powerful commerce was crippled and it now saw domain expanding to the Southwest where its doctrines had no foothold. But the New Englanders were unable to hinder by speech-making. The Territory was allowed to form a constitution and was formally admitted as a State, with her present boundaries, under the name of Louisiana, in 1812.

As the nation was drifting into war, the treasury was subjected to another and unnecessary strain. The Bank of the United States made application to Congress for a renewal of its charter. Twenty years had passed since it began, and it must soon go out of business unless Congress granted renewal. It had been prosperously managed, and its incorporators were now willing to make better offers to the government than were warranted at its start. But its sound business had not converted its old enemies. Loyal Republicans, as strict constructionists, held on to the idea that it was unconstitutionally chartered; that it represented monopoly and despotism. It was said that two thirds of its stock was owned by Englishmen, to whom went large dividends; that State banks should have the business and home citizens the profits.

These State banks had increased in the twenty years from three to one hundred and three, and they did not fancy the watch-care of the United States Bank. It had an unpleasant way of calling upon them to redeem.

The friends of re-charter set forth such reasons as might have been expected to weigh heavily with a war party needing loans and revenues. If the bank closed, millions of specie must go to England to buy back its stock; millions of bank notes now circulating

the length of the land must be called in; and the price of exchange between cities and towns would be put up. Nothing worse could be thought of than such a financial disarrangement of a country which had just thrown down the gauntlet to a foreign power. Gallatin saw it as suicidal, and urgently supported recharter, against the administration leaders and without the support of his chief. After a hard battle in both Houses, the bank almost won, losing in the Senate by the casting vote of Vice-President Clinton, and in the House by one vote only.

Here ended the first Congress under Madison. The two years had been trying ones to all concerned. Madison is usually held responsible for the disharmony, weakness and shiftiness of the government at this critical period. He is censured for not having pursued without faltering either one of the several courses open to him at the meeting of the ways, where he encountered Jefferson's perplexities. But it must be admitted that none of these courses led to any safe and honourable position for American commerce. Submission to all foreign insults was impossible; negotiation was next to impossible; and war with England, the most forbidding alternative, was that towards which events and the temper of the people tended. Madison was neither strong in initiative nor fearless in a policy once established. He was safe in safe times; that he fell upon troublous times was a misfortune against which he laboured with all the energies of a nature not forceful.

Until now the President had found himself invisibly hindered both in his cabinet and in Congress, while his chief dependence, Gallatin, at the head of the Treasury Department, was opposed by active enemies,—especially by Smith, the Secretary of

State. When the family controversy got too wearisome, Madison came to decisive action. He must keep the invaluable Gallatin and get a new Secretary of State. Smith was accordingly required to resign, and Monroe, who was then the popular governor of Virginia, was induced to take his place. In so doing he put aside his old rivalry with Madison, as the situation and his own chivalrous nature demanded. By this judicious choice Madison created a more friendly environment for his own difficult work, retaining his tried coadjutor and securing to the administration Monroe's considerable talent and influence.

New England Federalism bestirred itself in the Spring elections. It attacked the policy of the administration, especially as it was shaped in the new statute which threatened England and annihilated commerce. Yet in Massachusetts, in spite of such influential opposition, the Republicans elected their governor, Elbridge Gerry; and also a legislature which, in the course of the next year, did some remarkable party work. It re-distributed electoral districts throughout the State in a way that secured Republican majorities, but at the cost of county lines. The extraordinary shape of one of these new districts in Essex County had a dragon-like contour. When Gilbert Stuart, the famous painter, marked the strange shape upon a map, he supplied with his pencil a head, wings and claws, saying, "That will do for a salamander." "Better say a Gerrymander," exclaimed a Federalist. Thus was the word coined which has since stood for any arbitrary arrangement of the political divisions of a State which gives an unfair party advantage.

A new minister came over from George III., but he had nothing to say on the burning question of

repeal. He was authorised only to make up arrears of redress. The old Chesapeake affair was settled on exactly the terms which Erskine and Madison had agreed upon, and which the English ministry had then turned down. This redress was too tardy to create any spirit of reconcilement among the American people. At the same time England, in an inconsistent humour, asked the plainly impossible; let the United States, a neutral nation, open to her all French ports, and after that she would revoke her Orders.

Napoleon, equally strenuous for a sharp bargain, had wanted to hear the act of Congress before releasing the great amount of American property sequestered by his command.

The exchange of shots and broadsides by the British *Little Belt* and an American vessel, the *President*, as the latter was cruising off Cape Charles, was an event of the year. Diplomatically, it was allowed to pass as an accident, but it was such an one as can happen only in inflamed times. That the advantage, and possibly some blame, was with the American frigate, did none the less fire anti-British sentiment. It was obvious, as the President said, that such an occurrence was not unlikely to bring on repetitions.

There was also new feeling against England prompted by the Indian uprising under the crafty warrior Tecumseh in the Indian Territory. The evidences were strong that, on the frontier, the Indians were helped to the King's stores and were started against the Americans. After the young governor of the Territory, William Henry Harrison, had routed the red men on the Tippecanoe river, Tecumseh crossed the border to join the King's service.

The twelfth Congress was a new organism. Fresh

blood from the South and Southwest had vitalised it, for good or for evil. Conservatism, peace and economy from this time on marked only Federalists and old-fogy Republicans. The war-hawks were now the leaders, and those who would not be left behind must follow their cry. The House had elected for Speaker a new member from Kentucky, Henry Clay. Thither he had come from a short term in the Senate, the constraint of which he had been glad to exchange for the freedom of the popular branch. But while a new and young Senator, he had distinguished himself by fighting the national bank against its able defender, Crawford. His fame and fascination gained him immediate leadership in the House,—an unprecedented honour. With his advent hesitancy departed. The majority of the representatives were ready for a popular leader and a spirited policy. He furnished both. It seemed a case of the man and the hour.

It was a Congress of young men. They had swept the country at the election; less than half of the eleventh Congress was returned to the twelfth. They were the sons superseding the fathers and pushing aside the temporizers. They had come in to administer what had been set up for them. They believed in a number of things which had not been taught as democratic doctrines,—standing armies, an increased navy, taxes, protection, and war. They had no disposition to wait upon European grace to get commercial rights. Henry Clay represented them perfectly. He was idealised young America, and so remained in the hearts of the people for forty years.

President Madison's message was not designed to check the warlike disposition of Congress, and yet it

was not authoritative. Monroe summarised it as meaning "to get ready to fight, and to fight when we were ready." Unreadiness was the sound reason for not going to war. Wise heads saw this in its proper bigness. War-hawks let the problem of preparation fall upon the Secretary of War, Gallatin, and were not happy when they had to listen to his solid figures.

Clay appointed the committees with reference to war measures, and the six resolutions, speedily passed, had in view the creation of an invading army to conquer Canada. He advocated liberal provision for naval as well as military equipment. Custom duties, treasury notes and loans were found to be necessary accompaniments of a bold programme, and were accordingly authorised. In many of these bills the advanced Republicans were aided by the votes of Federalists whose intent was to embarrass the administration. Moreover, they believed that to hurry on an ill-advised conflict with England was the only way left to them to overthrow the Republican party. They could make satisfactory peace with their old friend when these brewers of mischief had been whipped and turned out.

The Executive seemed to think that public opinion was still wavering, at least that new proof of England's unfriendliness would be worth considerable,—worth, in fact, fifty thousand dollars. For that was the sum which Madison paid to John Henry, an Englishman, for documents disclosing a British intrigue to encourage a separation of the American States. Henry had travelled through New England in 1808, and had sent back to the governor-general of Canada letters reporting the excited talk which then ran high among the Federalists. These letters were no more

than gossip, no names nor facts being given. They were indeed proof that Henry was sent to Boston from Canada to discover signs of mutiny. That was really all. Lord Liverpool had refused to pay the huckster one shilling, but he found good market for his wares in Washington.

Madison had thus far trimmed his course with some skill and much worthy endeavour. He had done all that a man could do who listened to many voices, but who had none of the inner purpose which can give the final order. The presidential nomination was again at hand. Should Madison succeed himself? was the question which war-hawk and moderate Republicans alike asked. Was he for war or for peace? The story is that Clay and his friends dictated terms to the President, offering him his nomination in the caucus for a determined war policy. There is no evidence of this, save the fact that Madison did commit himself by the message of April 1, before the congressional caucus nominated him for President in May. This is not, however, proof of positive coercion. It seems like the mastering influence of a bold majority, leading him and his cabinet, because there must be a leader.

The programme which Clay proposed to the President, and which the President by a confidential message recommended to Congress, was to declare a temporary embargo, to be followed by a declaration of war. The bill embodying this proposal was rushed through both Houses, and became a law on the 4th of April, 1812. The embargo was to last for ninety days. In spite of closed doors, the news of a new embargo got out; a flying express was sent eastward. The post-riders covered the distance from Washington to Boston, about five hundred miles, in seventy-

six hours. Great shipments were made, and many ships were sent hurriedly to sea.

It was during these days of embargo that the Republican caucus in Congress renominated Madison for president and named Elbridge Gerry for vice-president, George Clinton having died.

No cheering word came over from London. Resolves to repeal the Orders in Council had been voted down in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons. Jonathan Russell, the American *chargé* in London, wrote: "I no longer entertain a hope that we can honourably avoid war."

On June 1 the President sent his secret war message to the House. Calhoun, for the Committee on Foreign Relations, reported in favour of "an immediate appeal to arms." The next day the act passed by seventy-nine to forty-nine. It was stayed in the Senate for a fortnight, and got through by a majority of six. Madison signed it the next day, and on June 19 the proclamation was issued which declared that a state of war existed between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and its dependencies, and the United States of America.

Five days after the United States had declared war, a new English ministry, urged by commercial depression and tremendous war burdens, took a step towards amicable adjustment. British Orders were repealed. But this overture came too late. Armistice and a treaty were talked of, but neither side seemed able to advance nearer to what was so desirable for both. Russell found that the ministry would not promise to stop impressment, which was the old issue. It now became the one on which the war was waged. The cry of the enslaved "tar" was a human note. "It should take more to make peace than prevent war,"

was Jefferson's comment. "Free trade and sailors' rights" expressed the sentiment of the war.

This Congress was called "the immortal twelfth." It had been a bold assembly, bearing a decided stamp of the new West. Mr. Clay's brilliant personality and masterly leadership had introduced a new element into Congress. Yet, after considering vainly ways and means to carry on the war which it had declared begun, it adjourned without providing them. Its leaders had been resolute enough in pushing Madison into his warlike position, but there they seemed willing to leave him.

In New England the work of this Congress was detested. Bells were tolled and flags put at half mast. At a Fourth of July celebration at Dedham, Jefferson was toasted as Jereboam, who made Israel to walk in sin; Madison as Nadab, the son of Jereboam, who walked in the way of his father and in his sin. The ministers were almost a unit against war. The outrages committed at Baltimore against a Federal newspaper, now were foolishly held to be the work of the administration. Baltimore was called "Mob-Town," and the rioters, "Madison's Mob." Sectional feeling was strongly developed, and while the Eastern and Northern States loathed the idea of hostilities, the Southern and Western States were almost unanimous for war. It is doubtful if any pacific personal influence, even Washington's own, could have dominated public opinion in its four quarters at this particular time. Certainly Madison made no impression upon it.

The peace party held back the Northeast from that active preparation which was now every State's simple patriotic duty. But conviction has always been the only stuff out of which New Englanders

knew how to make patriotism; and in this case they were, unhappily for a strong pull all together, totally unconvinced.

The cry of the war promoters had been, "On to Canada!" Madison had written without faith to Jefferson of this project; "To enable the Executive to step at once into Canada they have provided, after two months' delay, for a regular force requiring twelve to raise it; and after three months, for a volunteer force, on terms not likely to raise it at all for that object." Led by this vague intention, the first move made with the raw, half-equipped recruits was towards the long frontier line stretching from Detroit to Lake Champlain.

This extensive work called for a large and strategic plan. But there was none such forthcoming from the war department, nor from the few trained general officers. These men were mostly soldiers of the Revolutionary War, who had rehearsed old campaigns for thirty years. During the most of the War of 1812-15 there were no real leaders in the army. The best men held subordinate offices till towards the close of the war. There was little practical preparedness; there was less headwork. General Hull's premature invasion of Upper Canada was followed by an ignominious collapse. He fell back to Detroit and surrendered without firing a gun. Then came more fiascos on the Niagara Line. In fact, the land campaign of 1812 proved a bitter disappointment. There had been brave talk, backed by slight preparation, and by no plan for vigorous invasion.

Unexpected encouragement came, however, through the extraordinary victories of the navy. Eighteen frigates, corvettes, brigs and schooners, with one hundred and seventy-six gun-boats, com-

prised the whole naval defense. But some of the ships were finely built, while all were manned by select captains and highly trained gunners. The American captains of this war were, in truth, an unusual set of men; they had learned their profession, and many nimble tricks besides, in the Tripolitan war under Preble, who was the father of the American navy. As to the men behind the guns,—Americans have always thought it worth while to aim if they fired a gun, and in all their naval wars they have been distinguished for marksmanship; government might be niggardly, but the navy has found a way to get powder for target practice, and the seamen have had cool heads. The sailors at this time, no less than the captains, were picked men. The great neutral carrying trade of the few years past, with large wages, had attracted a matchless body of seamen. They now took up the national defense of the coast, from Eastport to the Chesapeake, with alacrity of spirit and precision of work.

Madison, speaks of these sea successes as "our little naval triumphs." But that was not the term which history was to apply to the victories of the frigate *Constitution*, Captain Hull, over the frigate *Guerriere*; of the sloop of war *Wasp*, Captain Jones, over the sloop of war *Frolic*; of the frigate *United States*, Captain Decatur, over the frigate *Macedonian*; of the frigate *Constitution*, again, over the frigate *Java*,—all in the last four months of 1812; and of Captain Lawrence's *Hornet* over the brig of war *Peacock*, in February, 1813. The people were sensible of the magnitude and significance of these triumphs over the great sea power, and testified their enthusiasm by ovations to the heroes. Lady Madison (as the President's wife at that period was called),

at a ball given in honour of Captain Hull, received, amidst excited applause, the colours of the captured *Macedonian*, which Decatur's messenger had just brought to Washington as a trophy of another victory.

But the astonishment at home was less than that in England. Her undisputed mastery on the ocean had been challenged, and American commerce was avenged on the highway where it had suffered.

These naval battles were simultaneous with Madison's struggle for reëlection. In the field against him was DeWitt Clinton, also a Republican. Clinton had recently, however, suited his principles to the peace Federalists and to the malcontents of his own party, and thus had gained his nomination by a strong coalition. It was a discreditable conspiracy, which disclosed personal ambition in its bareness. The young New York politician, Martin Van Buren, managed the campaign for Clinton. The contest turned out to be very close. The North was almost solid for Clinton. Pennsylvania gave the deciding vote for Madison and Gerry.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

It was said by eye-witnesses of President Madison's second inauguration that he was thinner and paler than on the hopeful day four years before. The year of war with England had left its mark upon his slight physique, and anxiety over the outcome of the struggle was in the weak voice which advocated the vigorous pursuit of peace through conflict.

But his tactful wife was at his side, courageous and devoted. James G. Blaine says in his letters that "Mrs. Madison saved the administration of her husband, held him back from the extremes of Jeffersonianism, and enabled him to escape from the dilemma of the War of 1812. But for her DeWitt Clinton would have been chosen president in 1812." This is a large tribute to pay to a woman whose grasp of politics seems to have been confined strictly to the personal side. Her good nature and social grace won and kept friends among both parties. Her influence was pervasive and dominated Washington society. The wives of all the public men doted on "Lady Dolly," and such well-based popularity undoubtedly had weight in preventing her husband's defeat.

Washington Irving, on his first visit to the capital, in 1811, when but a young man of letters, wrote of the "blazing splendour of Mrs. Madison's drawing-room"; and of the lady herself: "Mrs. Madison is a fine, buxom dame, who has a smile and a pleasant

word for everybody." He further lightly says: "But as to Jemmy Madison,—ah! poor Jemmy; he is but a withered little apple-john." Somewhat later, in writing about a diplomatic appointment, he bases his hopes of securing it on the pretty reason that Mrs. Madison is a sworn friend of his. The difference in kind is conspicuous between this queenly, worldly Quakeress of the South, whose reign had begun early in Jefferson's administration, and that of her predecessor from the North, Abigail Adams, the strenuous and intellectual Puritan. Both wives belong to history as keen partisans and wise counsellors.

The first two years of Madison's second administration were to continue under the cloud of war, with hopes of peace breaking through now and again, until, in the beginning of 1815, bells and cannon proclaimed them a reality. It was altogether a dark season. Every defeat cast a shadow upon the Executive, and successes reflected no glory upon a man whose virtue was prudence, but who had been dragged into an ill-timed war.

Congress was more and more dominant. The Thirteenth Congress assembled a new force of young men to join Clay, Calhoun, Cheves and Grundy, who had led the Republicans for the past two years.

One of the new accessions to Congress, and one who also showed immediate leadership, was a moderate Federalist. This was a young New Hampshire farmer and lawyer named Daniel Webster. Another and the greatest of New England orators had come upon the stage. Clay, who was again Speaker, recognised the new genius and gave Webster a place in Calhoun's Committee on Foreign Affairs. Russia was at this time cultivating the art of peace-making. The American government immediately

responded to her offer, without waiting to know England's temper, and appointed a commission to go to Russia. The British were at the same time tempting the New England States by offering them severally licenses to trade with the West Indies. The government was obliged to decline, with warnings of penalty, these distinguished foreign favours to special States. New England herself, however, disliked too thoroughly the war to feel resentment at an offer which promised invidious commercial advantages to herself. Above all, the continued, imperative work of raising money was before the new Congress. Other provisions falling far short of meeting the year's expenses, direct taxes and internal duties were ways and means which now it had unwillingly to revive.

The land campaign of 1813 opened well. Harrison undertook to recover Detroit early in the year. The first expedition under General Winchester ended, however, in the disaster and massacre at the River Raisin, where an unconditional surrender to the English was followed by the barbarities of their red allies. But Harrison, now major-general, received generous reinforcements from the zealous West, and regathered himself for the summer campaign. In this he was aided by Captain Oliver H. Perry, who was in command of the squadron which had been built on Lake Erie. On this lake he engaged the English fleet under Barclay, a Trafalgar veteran. Perry made a gallant fight, crossing from his battered flagship to another vessel, and at last winning the day in a close encounter of eight minutes. His message to Harrison was the famous one: "We have met the enemy and they are ours." His battle flag bore the dying Lawrence's last order, "Don't give up the ship." This was a new sort of sea victory for the Amer-

icans—squadron against squadron. Harrison was now able to advance to his original undertaking, that of regaining Michigan. The English, whom he met on the river Thames, did not stand before his dashing cavalry charge. Among the Indians who fell, after a hand to hand fight, was the celebrated chief, Tecumseh. This victory rounded up a campaign of substantial results; all that Hull had lost was regained, and a considerable part of Upper Canada was occupied.

But, on the other hand, along the St. Lawrence and Niagara frontier the conquest of Canada advanced only to fall back. Major-general Dearborn was a worn-out commander and unfit to lead offensive warfare. He lost every point almost as soon as he had gained it. Golden opportunities slipped through his hands. Nor was there a better state of affairs under General Wilkinson who took Dearborn's command in the summer. This old soldier, also in bad health and with a reputation sullied in Burr's day, brought unfortunate rivalry into camp. On account of lack of concert with General Wade Hampton, his descent of the St. Lawrence stopped short of Montreal, though the city was poorly garrisoned and his forces were 12,000, all told. Jefferson had written: "I fear we are to expect reverses until we can find out who are qualified for command, and until these can learn their profession." But the difficulty was to find out, and for Madison even more to turn out the unqualified and inefficient.

While these operations on the northern frontier were in progress, startled public attention was called to the far south. A massacre by the Creek Indians at the American Fort Nims made the summer of 1813 horribly memorable. This peaceable tribe had been

first excited to a state of fanaticism by Tecumseh, and then urged on to an uprising by English and Spanish agents. Four hundred refugees perished by fire or tomahawk in the stockade fort. Andrew Jackson, the choleric Tennesseean, hastened with his volunteers to meet the emboldened Indians. Here was a man with the military instinct. He knew how to originate, how to execute promptly, and how to stick to his task. He was a lawyer by profession, a fighter by birth and by hard knocks of fortune. The administration was not concerned to put him forward, but his name and his repute for daring were in the mouths of a noisy constituency. He had sooner or later to be recognised. Particularly was this the case after he had subjugated the Creeks at the battle of the Horseshoe, in March, 1814. He vigorously put an end not only to the uprising of the Creek Indians, which was a war within a war, but, by the same stroke, he broke the power of the red man in his native North America.

The five naval duels, each one of which was a victory for the Americans, were followed, in this trying year, by defeat in the sixth of these celebrated sea matches. Captain James Lawrence, lately promoted for his work in South American waters, lost his life and his ship, the unlucky *Chesapeake*, fighting the *Shannon* in Massachusetts Bay. The British challenge, the American acceptance in spite of unreadiness and mutiny, the close, raking fire, the lashing of ships and the swarming of boarders, Lawrence expiring as a captive on the way to Halifax, and his honoured burial by the English, make up as stirring a narrative of sea heroism as Anglo-Saxon annals afford.

Indeed, naval affairs had now a sorry aspect. The

large ships in repair docks or on remote duty, three frigates prisoners by the British blockade off New London and Norfolk, and nearly every brig captured; such was the predicament of the Atlantic sea-board. The victorious campaign of Harrison and Perry stood out alone to comfort the Americans during this season.

Madison had been quite sanguine, when he sent his peace commission over to Russia, that the Czar knew the mind of both parties, and he reasonably expected mediation to be possible. When Gallatin and Bayard joined John Quincy Adams at St. Petersburg, they found in the Czar's chancellor a host and friend by necessity, but he could only tell them that England had refused the offer which their own country had so gladly accepted. He indeed presented again his services to the English ministry, but they were courteously declined. Discouraged, the commission left Russia during the winter of 1813-'14, coming on the scene of Napoleon's overwhelming defeat. They then learned that Lord Castlereagh had formally offered to negotiate directly with the United States, and that President Madison had accepted the proposal. Henry Clay and Jonathan Russell were sent to join them on the new commission.

General Wilkinson renewed the attempt to conquer Canada, in the spring of 1814, with even more than his former inefficiency. But he was soon relieved of command. Wade Hampton was also allowed to resign. Some real soldiers succeeded them. One new major-general, George Izard, a soldier trained in France, was set to operate about Lake Champlain. Another, Jacob Brown, was home-made, but of excellent quality; a Quaker farmer beginning the war with a militia general's commission, he had won his

brigadier-generalcy in the regular army for the brave defense of Sackett's Harbour; and now he was put in full command on the Niagara frontier. Under him were such commanders of brigades as Scott, Gaines, and Ripley. The army itself had been made over by two years of hard training. But the wasted summers of 1812 and 1813, when England had been content to keep the defensive, could not be made up now. Napoleon had fallen, and there was instant relief to England on the Continent. Now she had veterans to send across the sea, and could begin aggressive fighting.

General Brown met the enemy near Niagara Falls in the very bloody battle of Lundy's Lane, where the field was left to the Americans, who were, however, unable to keep it or carry off the guns. Fort Erie, on the Canadian side, which had been captured by the Americans, was now blown up and deserted as they withdrew to their own shore. When Brown and his army had marched to the western end of Lake Ontario, the British promptly seized Oswego at the eastern end. They also concentrated land and naval forces at the head of Lake Champlain. The light American flotilla gathered on the Lake met the invading squadron and forced a surrender of all its ships. Upon this defeat of its navy the invading army dispersed. Thus, honours on and about the fresh water line were nearly equal when summer hostilities stopped.

The English had determined to mark the campaign of 1814 by a serious diversion from the Canadian frontier to the Atlantic seaboard. A very effective blockade was established. Admiral Cockburn, who had done paltry pilfering and burning through incursions upon the waterways during the previous sea-

son, was again about,—this time for bigger game. The news of the blockade and further serious intent on the part of the English, caused some uneasiness at Washington. The Chesapeake was meagrely protected. To create a special defence of the seat of government General Winder was appointed commander of the new military district of the Potomac. He had a handful of some five hundred regulars, with a considerable show of militia. The President asked Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania for their quotas of militia.

Yet, in spite of this appearance of preparation, nothing at all was really done. Winder either held back, or was held back by the hesitation of his superiors, from anything seasonable or adequate. Madison's unfitness for the work of commander-in-chief, which was plainly felt at the most remote battle-ground, was painfully evident when a raid threatened the capital. Armstrong, the Secretary of War, laughed at the danger, as though the great village was charmed and state papers were vandal proof.

Thus it was that when an August day brought the express telling of a British fleet of fifty ships and transports off the mouth of the Potomac there was frantic activity at the capital. Admiral Cockburn had been joined by General Ross, who had come from Bermuda with soldiers fresh from Wellington's wars. These commanders finally decided to direct their first attack upon Washington itself. They sailed past the Potomac and up the Patuxent river, as far as possible. There they landed a force of 4,500 trained men and began a quick march across the country.

The burning of Washington was the most startling event of the war. Yet the importance is easily overestimated, for it is difficult to realise what a poor town

the isolated and straggling capital then was, and that it had no great commonwealth to back its defence. Yet it was so easily taken only because the authorities were incompetent and the militia unreliable. The whole affair was discreditable to both sides. This is the story of it.

Commodore Barney, who had a flotilla of gunboats on the Patuxent river, blew them up at the approach of the British by command of Secretary Armstrong, and took his marines to join Winder's land force. Some works had been hastily thrown up at Bladensburg, the citizens of Washington joining in the labour. This was a point on the road from the British landing-place to Washington. Thither General Winder and his counsellors hurried the troops from the navy yard at Washington, upon news that Ross was marching. When the meeting occurred, the helter-skelter American army numbered 6,000, including regulars, marines, militia, stragglers, citizens, the cabinet and President Madison. It is almost enough to say about the business that the British were not like their predecessors, who turned and fled from the "embattled farmers" at Concord; and the Americans had little resemblance to their fathers who held Bunker Hill against the repeated charges of the British infantry. The Americans were doomed from the outset. They were excited incompetents, from the President down, not from lack of personal courage, but because there was no master at the head and no training in the ranks. A lieutenant in the English army, named Gleig wrote afterwards a story of his campaign as "A Subaltern in America," in which he describes the heterogeneous force thus: "A few companies only, perhaps two or three battalions, wearing the blue jacket which the Americans have

borrowed from the French, presented some appearance of regular troops. The rest seemed country-people, who would have been much more appropriately, employed in attending to their agricultural occupations than in standing with muskets in their hands on the brow of a bare green hill." When things were evidently going badly, the helpless President said to Monroe and Armstrong, "It would now be proper for us to retire in the rear, leaving military movements to military men." But before they could slip behind, the rout had become pell-mell. Amateurs and militia were alike demoralised. The only good fighting done was by Barney and his marines; though deserted, they had no idea of quitting but stood four hundred against four thousand, maintaining a biting fire upon the invaders until flanked and torn to pieces.

In the meantime, Washington, left to the care of its old men, clerks, women and children, had been a busy scene from Sunday till Wednesday, the 24th, when the sound of cannon told the city that actual fighting was going on at Bladensburg. The anxious hours had been spent in packing up public documents, securing bank specie, and family valuables. It is gratifying to come here upon a brave lady of degree. Mrs. Madison became her position and fame in this emergency; she thought of her husband's safety before her own; she recognised the importance of public property over private. She has left a vivid picture of those days in a diary letter to her sister. On the day of flight, she tells how she was saving Gilbert Stuart's picture of General Washington by having the frame broken and the canvas taken out, because there was no time to unscrew it from the

wall. "It is done," she says, "and the precious portrait is placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York for safe keeping." She pressed as many cabinet papers into trunks as to fill her carriage. "Our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to procure wagons for its transportation," she also wrote. This lady, who knew naturally the grace of public service, carried with her, as more precious than her jewels, the original draft of the Declaration of Independence. Although her husband had sent her repeated warnings from the battlefield, she refused to separate herself further from him, until at last Mr. Madison's servant galloped up, crying, "Clear out! clear out! General Armstrong has ordered a retreat!" and even then she had almost to be forced into a carriage. She drove out as far as Georgetown, then turned about and came back to the capital in time to meet her husband and the army retreating through the city. The President crossed to Virginia, while Mrs. Madison went to stay with friends beyond Georgetown.

The city was left to the raiders, who encamped near it at night-fall. From that time on the proprieties of war did not restrain them. Ross and Cockburn headed the troops that fired the Capitol; they ransacked the White House, and then, the furniture being piled up in the drawing-room, set fire to it by a live coal brought from a near tavern. Next the Treasury building was lighted. The conflagrations then illumined the night until a fierce thunder-storm checked the flames. The next morning saw the Departments of State and of War smoking in ruins also. During that day a still more terrific storm burst over the city,—an uprooting cyclone which produced a

singular feeling of panic among the British, and seemed to determine them to get back as quickly as possible to their transports.

The loss of public records was of course irreparable. The destruction of the navy yard, begun by the Americans and finished by the British, was another blow. A British fleet at the same time came up the Potomac and attacked Fort Washington, capturing the vessels in the river and imposing terms upon Alexandria. These were disgraceful disasters which were mitigated only by the English repulse at Baltimore and the American successes on Lake Champlain soon after. The death of Ross and the final departure of the troops for Jamaica relieved the harassed shores of Virginia and Maryland.

When Congress met in the autumn, the administration was very much embarrassed both for men and money to carry on the war into another year; the country at large was depressed, and beneath this natural feeling there was also sectional disaffection which menaced the Union itself. The prominent Federalists in the East had assumed leadership since the beginning of the war. They had many wrongs stored up since 1801 against the Republican administration, and they were not slow to bring them forward in this dark hour of a contest which they disbelieved in. Madison wrote to Governor Nicholas of Virginia his opinion of New England in language not exactly temperate. He said that "the greater part of the people in that quarter have been brought by their priests under a delusion scarcely exceeded by that recorded in the period of witchcraft; and the leaders themselves are daily becoming more desperate in the use they make of it."

The senate of Massachusetts now expressed itself.

It recommended that its governor should ask the other New England States to join in a delegate convention to consider their relation to the general government and its present course. The result of this call was that three States,—Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island—appointed twenty-three delegates to represent them. This ill-starred assemblage was known as the Hartford Convention of December, 1814. There, for three weeks, Eastern grievances were discussed in secrecy.

The resulting report which each delegation presented to its own State was called treasonable by the administration party; while the hot-headed disunionists found it ineffectual. It has remained a matter for discussion ever since. One point is uncontested,—that it was untimely and proved destructive to the Federalists. Dissolution of the Union had been considered by their representative men, and henceforth nothing could pry suspicion of that party out of the brain of any staunch unionist. In pursuance of this report, commissioners of Massachusetts and Connecticut were appointed to set out for Washington, and there to urge the recommendations of the convention upon the government of the United States. They arrived at the capital just as news of the battle of New Orleans was received. Shortly afterwards came the still more joyful tidings that peace had been agreed upon at Ghent. Their mission was derided, and there was nothing left for them but to turn back and accept, with the peace, their loss of power.

The battle of New Orleans was the climax of the war. The British campaign of 1814 had been planned for a final strike at the mouths of the Mississippi. The Niagara, the St. Lawrence, and the

Atlantic coast had not received such serious English attention as was now concentrated on the expedition which, making its rendezvous at Bermuda, hastened to surprise the Spanish-French city. Its defence, as an American military outpost was entirely inadequate. But President Madison and Monroe, his new Secretary of War, were now wide awake to the operations of the fleet which had so recently quitted their neighbourhood. It had worked ruin on Washington; it had been repelled at Baltimore; it might now get its deserts on the distant bayous of the Gulf of Mexico. Madison knew that while he had been weak at home, he had a strong arm in General Jackson to put forth in the Southwest. The urgency of his messages to Jackson was supplemented with spirited aid. He warned Jackson that the enemy would surely attack New Orleans. He ordered the troops from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia to march to the Gulf. He backed his orders with generous supplies of money.

But the elate general was ready to work miracles unaided by absent superiors. He had cowed a fierce Indian uprising, and he had just stormed the English at Pensacola. With no failure behind him, and faith in himself, he hastened to intrench his heterogeneous army before New Orleans. In the final engagement of January 8, 1815, called the Battle of New Orleans, his long line of defence, along the ditch he had dug from the river to the woods, was composed of regulars, sailors, creoles, Baratarian pirates, free negroes, San Domingons, French soldiers, Tennesseeans in brown homespun hunting shirts, and Kentucky riflemen. This was not a pretty army, but they were sure marksmen.

It was far, however, from an equal match; for, while this novel army numbered 5,000, the British,

who had come in fifty large ships, had landed 10,000 veterans to meet them. There were two confident advances and two paralysing repulses, in which the British lost 2,000 men, among them many officers. General Pakenham himself, the hero of Salamanca, was among the fallen. Jackson lost but 62 of his men. Monroe's despatch reads: "History records no example of so glorious a victory obtained with so little bloodshed on the part of the victorious."

The English were too thoroughly beaten to resume their attacks, and the Americans did not hinder their withdrawal. The departing fleet captured Fort Bowyer at the entrance to Mobile Bay, two days before the news of peace arrived.

This battle of New Orleans occurred after the treaty of peace had been signed at Ghent, but before the news had reached the American shore. It was of course not determining in obtaining peace, and had no influence upon the treaty stipulations. Had it marked the summer of 1814, it is possible that the American commissioners at Ghent might have maintained the sailors' rights as a *sine qua non.*

While war had not slackened in the New World, in Ghent five Americans and three Englishmen had for months been trying to arrange a peace. They began to negotiate early in August, and kept steadily at it until Christmas Eve, when the Treaty of Ghent was signed. This treaty was remarkable for the subjects which it avoided. It mentioned neither blockades nor impressment, the intolerable wrongs which drove the States into the second war of independence. On this account the war has by some been called a failure. The fact that American ships and sailors have since then been respected abroad is the conclusive demonstration that the underlying

object of the war was gained. Sure of their country's accruing strength, and trusting to its effectual influence in the future, the Americans were content to leave out some things they had at first demanded, therein showing a large fashion of diplomacy. Besides, the English gave up almost every one of their first claims, actually, as well as in treaty stipulations. Their commissioners demanded great concessions, and asserted that they would not make peace unless they obtained them. Clay declared that it was a game of brag, and was stimulated to high talk himself in order to match them. But the downright Adams and Gallatin met their opponents with principles, and doggedly won point after point.

The English commissioners were really inferior to those on the American side in personal points; but though weak in ability they were strong in excessive demands. They wanted an Indian territory sliced off from the United States, to be forever a barrier between it and the possessions of Great Britain; they wanted the boundary line between Canada and the United States revised, so that they should have a piece of Maine and a new line from Lake Superior to the Mississippi. They wanted the United States to disarm on the great lakes and their rivers, while Great Britain was to be allowed to keep her ships and forts; they intended to keep what they had got in the Passamaquoddy Bay; and they asked the Americans to stop fishing in British waters. These demands called forth an answer framed by John Quincy Adams, the "sifting, erasing, patching and amending" being done by the whole commission in a paper of high rank. They refused flatly to consider such terms, and at once sent despatches home. Congress was sitting

when the papers arrived. The House ordered ten thousand copies printed and given to the public. The sensation was prodigious. The American people were not willing to pay that price for peace. But in the meantime the English had withdrawn from their ultimata; the demands for an Indian territory and for supremacy on the lakes were dropped entirely, and at last they agreed that the territory of each nation should remain intact, as before the war. On this point Wellington was very frank to the English ministry: "You have won nothing yet in the American war which gives you the right to demand on principle, a territorial concession," was his advice. Upon agreement, rights of Newfoundland fisheries and of the Mississippi were points omitted. Thus, by mutual concessions and omissions, a treaty was executed which brought the peace.

The announcement of the treaty in America, made in February, 1815, was received with universal welcome; the administration, the war-hawks, and the Federalists rejoiced together.

The last two years of Madison's presidency were bright in contrast with those preceding. The happy peace put an end to general bickering. Forgetting and forgiving came easily as the people went about their renewed business interests. The country was not impoverished or wasted by the long war; less than sixteen hundred men had been killed in the three years; and no rich town or region had been plundered. Yet the strain had been long and tense; the relief was correspondingly grateful. The young and buoyant nation felt that all fetters were at last removed. The war had not been wholly creditable, but when ended, it unquestionably meant that Eng-

land and France could never again treat America as natural prey. She was proven capable of self-defence.

Historically these years, which brought restoration to the spirit of the President, as well as activity to trade, are not widely interesting. Domestic questions engrossed the attention of Congress. Finances were grown desperate, for public credit had gone very low; specie payments were suspended; the precious metals were hoarded, and an uncontrollable paper currency demoralised business. With these difficulties Madison and his new Secretary of the Treasury, Dallas, grappled. The latter proposed to revive the discarded National Bank, and through it to restore national credit and specie payments. Calhoun pleaded for it in the House; and Clay, who had been bent upon its destruction in 1811, came down to the floor from his Speaker's chair to give his reasons for now supporting it, accepting the charge of inconsistency for the sake of the present interests of the country. Webster was one who opposed the bill. But the Fourteenth Congress, Republicans and Federalists, voted a charter to the new institution for twenty-one years; and the financial disease of the country was too acute for Madison, in spite of his previous conviction that it was unconstitutional, to oppose the remedy which the leaders agreed upon. The new Bank was modelled after Hamilton's, but gave greater power and privilege to the government. Resumption by the national treasury followed, in 1817, and Madison had the immense satisfaction of seeing public credit restored before he quitted office.

With peace came a peace footing for the War Department. Only ten thousand men were retained in the army. The President appointed two major-

generals, Jacob Brown and Andrew Jackson. The navy was not reduced, but further improvement was provided. The small vessels of this period were beautifully and ingeniously built, the despairing admiration of the British; but the experiments of Robert Fulton did not begin to revolutionise the navy until long after this war had closed.

Indeed, the navy was at once to undertake new exploits. An American vessel having suffered from Algerine pirates during the war, Madison, after the treaty of Ghent had been ratified, asked that a new war be declared against Algiers. Congress so declared, and Commodore Decatur was sent with a large squadron to punish the navy of the Dey, and make him listen to civilised terms. This was a spirited little war, and its single campaign was accomplished with despatch. The Algerian cruisers were captured; and then, before Algiers, on the deck of his flag-ship, Decatur dictated a peace to the Dey. Thence he proceeded to Tripoli and Tunis, and took account from the Bey and the Bashaw for certain help they had given to the British. The result of this vigour was that North African piracy was abolished for all time.

The war taxes for internal revenue were naturally obnoxious to Democratic doctrine, and had to be reduced as soon as possible. The deficit thus produced was made up by increased custom duties, which virtually assumed the form of protection for domestic manufactures. This new and widespread interest had lately appeared, to rival commerce in the East and agriculture in the South. The tariff for its protection began to be an agitating theme.

The close of the war seemed to complete the doom of the Federal party. It had based its hopes on the

expected failure of its own government; it had been sectional and disloyally threatening. It was now stranded by the strong sweep of national spirit. There was practically one party of sanguine people. This unanimity of feeling gave a peaceful ending to the last Congress convened under Madison, and continued what has been termed the Virginia "dynasty" in the very popular election of Monroe. Daniel Tompkins, governor of New York, was elected vice-president.

There is a feeling among historical students of Federalist leaning that Madison lacked political courage, and that he was much beyond his depth in the War of 1812, which, it is asserted, at the same time his presidential ambition had precipitated. It is easy to see that he was not naturally a man for combat, and that his training was legislative. Yet he was the choice of the people for executive responsibility, and the emergencies of the time were such as to cause almost every statesman to trim his theories. That a theoretical personal opinion should be proof against the argument of events is only an assumption; really, nothing is more illogical. If Madison did not fearlessly break political entanglements, he certainly never wove them, nor is it likely that he ever meant to be less than an honestly ambitious man.

Like Jefferson, Madison passed many years in happy retirement. At his home, Montpellier, he observed, corresponded, and contributed to the historical record of his times. He was fond of recalling the earlier period of the Republic, and he looked forward to its future with anticipation. That time of stress, however, when the burden of war was upon him, he was reluctant to remember. He was an invariably kind master, and considered anxiously the problem of slavery in the future. He was interested in the

young temperance movement, and was himself very abstemious. He held Jefferson's lofty idea of the object of democracy, to secure the rights and improve the condition of each individual. He was always interested in education, being for many years devoted to the interests of the University of Virginia. He believed in the capacity of the female mind, and consequently in its right to the highest education. If he had had less personal ambition, or perhaps lived in another day, he would have been a philanthropist or a reformer. His intelligent slave, Paul Jennings, says of him, "Mr. Madison, I think, was one of the best men I ever knew."

PRESIDENT JAMES MONROE.

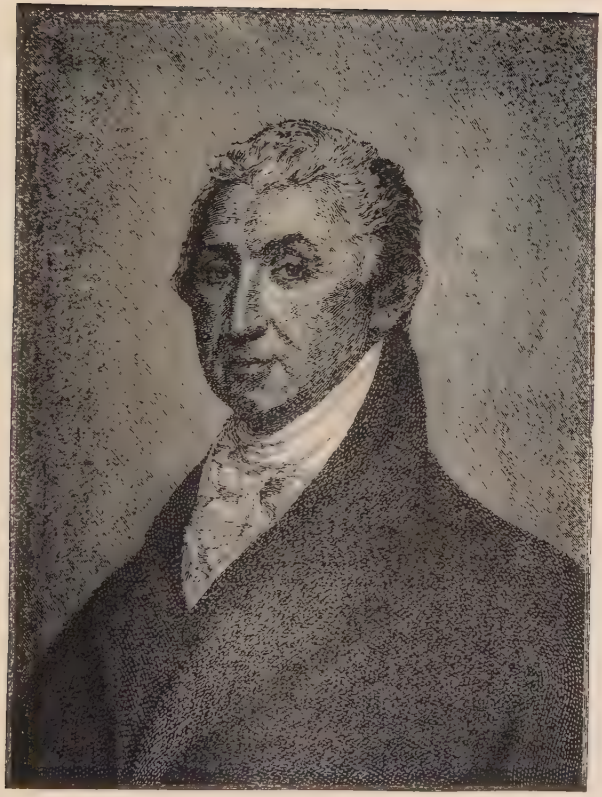
(TWO ADMINISTRATIONS, 1817-1825.)

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAST OF THE VIRGINIA LINE.

JAMES MONROE became the fifth president of the United States. He was the fourth and last to be chosen from the State of Virginia. His two predecessors had carried the country and the Republican party through the strain of war and through the rivalries of England and France. He was to enjoy, during his own administrations following, a distinguished era of peace and good times. He lacked but a year of sixty when he took this high and last office of a life nearly all of which, since he entered the Continental army at eighteen, had been a public career.

The young collegian who quitted his studies at William and Mary to be a soldier, at the outbreak of the American Revolution, was well-born and, like most Virginia youth, bred from boyhood to the love of civil liberty. At the first call of the Colonies more than twenty-five students from this college volunteered to fight; among them were John Marshall and James Monroe, the future great Chief Justice and the future Chief Magistrate of the new



JAMES MONROE.

Republic. The Monroe family had been settled in Westmoreland County, Virginia, for about a century when this son was born. They were Scotch cavaliers, descended, so says the family tradition, from Hector Monroe, an officer of Charles I. The father of the President was Spence Monroe, and his mother was Eliza Jones, of a family also conspicuous in the Old Dominion. The Monroes were neighbours to the Washingtons, the Lees and the Madisons, and with them had passed through the early throes of rebellion, caused by the Stamp Act, while James was a boy.

The youthful cadet entered the army at Washington's headquarters as Lieutenant Monroe of the Third Virginia Regiment. He was in the campaign on the Hudson, fighting with the troops at Haarlem and at White Plains. In the attack on Trenton, he and Captain William Washington led successfully the advance guard, driving back the British, capturing some artillery, and getting each an honourable wound. Monroe was aide to Lord Stirling in the following campaigns of 1777-'78, with the rank of major, serving very creditably in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. But this rank cost him his place in the regular line; and with chagrin he found himself out of the army as a commissioned officer. The disappointed aspirant had early in life high friends to smooth his way and soothe his feelings. A young man in whom Washington, Lord Stirling and Governor Jefferson were personally interested must have possessed decidedly those qualities that endear youth to men of maturity. In time Jefferson was able to send him as military commissioner to the Southern army; thus he became a lieutenant-colonel, and was, in all the subsequent

years, until attaining to the presidency, called Colonel Monroe. When again suffering from inactivity, he placed himself wholly under the patronage of Governor Jefferson, renewing acquaintance with books and beginning to study law under his guidance. At this time he wrote, "I submitted the direction of my time and plan to my friend, Mr. Jefferson, one of our wisest and most virtuous republicans; and aided by his advice, I have hitherto, of late, lived."

Military life was naturally followed by civil service in Revolutionary days, especially in that home of ambition, Virginia; and Monroe, not lacking friends and influence, found the step easy. He was chosen to the assembly of his State when but a little past his majority; he became a member of the executive council; and from these State affairs, he passed at once to a seat in the Continental Congress of 1783, just as the first peace with England was concluded.

As a member of three successive Congresses, Monroe shared in the apprehensions of that gloomy period; but he threw himself zealously and prominently into the discussions which absorbed Congress, and statesmen outside that body, in the interests of the preservation of the Union. He corresponded with Jefferson, who soon went to France, and with Madison, who was at home. All the large questions of those difficult days pressed upon him anxiously, and he found help in the intimate letters of older and wiser friends. He was a conspicuous advocate of the extension of the powers of Congress, and his motion to give that body authority to regulate trade between the States was a first step towards the Annapolis convention and the framing of a new constitution. His interest in the Northwest territory was as great as Jefferson's. He was of the committee to hand over

those far possessions of Virginia to the Federal government. His travels away from "the Atlantic part of the world" were, for those days, extended; and this first-hand acquaintance with his own land in his early life influenced deeply his future regard for her territorial rights, expansion and development. He was firmly of the opinion that the free navigation of the Mississippi must never be yielded to Spanish or to other foreign claims.

When the Virginia convention met in 1788, to ratify the Constitution, Monroe was one of its members. He stood, however, with Patrick Henry in opposition to the supporters, Madison, Marshall and Randolph. In his speeches he argued that the Constitution provided no adequate checks upon the exercise of power; that there would be conflict between National and State authority; and that the president might enjoy endless reëlection. He maintained that the great territory of the Mississippi could not be controlled after the plan of the Constitution.

This position, which antagonised the work his friend Madison had done, both in the convention and through his master efforts in that great expository book, *The Federalist*, did not prevent Monroe from being an early choice of the legislature of Virginia, to represent her in the new Senate. There he sat during the first administration of Washington, and until the President sent him over to France, to meet his second disappointment and first serious check. This appointment must surely have been a surprise to the senator who had for four years persistently opposed all the important measures of the administration. He believed in none of Hamilton's financial plans, and was not always a courteous objector. Washington gave him this mark of distinguishment,

according to his own fixed purpose to follow the lead of confidence rather than that of suspicion and administrative sensitiveness. It cannot be doubted that a man of Monroe's responsive temperament received such magnanimity with proper feeling.

Monroe's diplomatic career is of significant interest. It began with an early experience as envoy to the new French Republic in 1794. From this ticklish mission he was recalled after two years. He went to the same post a second time, when Jefferson wanted himself freshly represented in the bargain for Louisiana, in 1803. He then remained abroad as minister to England and negotiator at the Spanish court until 1807. He was thirty years old when he accepted the first appointment, and not fifty when he came home from his unaccepted work in London. So it may reasonably be said that, as a foreign representative, Monroe thought and acted as a young man, the more especially so since in him youthful glow died more slowly than in most public men. In these twenty years of diplomatic experience, however, he gained some very distinct and very sound views regarding the proper foreign relations of the United States, and the limits of the demands possible for his country to support. It is significant that the "Doctrine" which for three-fourths of a century has played the most important and unyielding part in the foreign relations of the United States, bears his name.

Monroe's first mission is particularly interesting because it displays his undisciplined characteristics, —rash enthusiasm, devotion to party, and a quick ear for popular applause. The later mission is of course better known, on account of the gigantic territorial aggrandizement resulting from it.

When Jefferson gave up watching the development of the French Revolution in Paris to take a secretaryship in Washington's first cabinet, Gouverneur Morris went out in his place. This able negotiator was shocked at the excesses of frenzy which he saw there. He did not conceal his sympathy with the unfortunate Royalists. This drew upon him the ire of French Republicans, who soon asked for his recall. Washington had sent to London John Jay, a jurist of English bias; and at this critical juncture in France he selected Monroe, an extreme Republican and sympathetic with the French, as the representative of a real republic to a fantastic and arbitrary one. Monroe's disagreement with the administration was considered to be of less moment than a friendly reception in Paris; for Washington made a wise use of the partialites of both an "Anglicized" party and a French party in the United States in the difficult task of keeping peace with the belligerents across the ocean. John Quincy Adams called these appointments very memorable in the history of the Union. Yet the result might seem to show the foolishness of wisdom, for Jay's treaty was too considerate of English demands, while Monroe lost the cool spirit of a representative in his enthusiasm over the idea of a sister republic.

Edmund Randolph, Secretary of State, sent Monroe off with careful instructions, which were presumably the mind of Washington. He concludes them with these words: "You go, sir, to France, to strengthen our friendship with that country; and you are well acquainted with the line of freedom and ease to which you may advance without betraying the dignity of the United States. You will show our confidence in the French Republic, without betray-

ing the most remote mark of undue complaisance. You will let it be seen that, in case of war with any nation on earth, we shall consider France as our first and natural ally. You may dwell upon the sense which we entertain of past services, and for the more recent interposition in our behalf with the Dey of Algiers. Among the great events with which the world is now teeming, there may be an opening for France to become instrumental in securing to us the free navigation of the Mississippi. Spain may, perhaps, negotiate a peace, separate from Great Britain, with France. If she does, the Mississippi may be acquired through this channel, especially if you contrive to have our mediation in any manner solicited."

When Monroe reached Paris Robespierre had fallen. Yet his decrees still burdened foreign commerce. As the Committee of Public Safety put off Monroe's official recognition, he saw fit to appeal to the President of the Convention by letter. The Convention voted to receive him at once. Thereupon, August 15, he appeared before that body, and presented a paper aglow with praises of the valour of French troops and the wisdom of French councils. These expressions were "heard with liveliest sensibility and covered with applause," according to French archives. In responding, the President gave him the fraternal embrace. There was afterwards another occasion of speech-making and embracing, when Monroe presented an American flag with a letter to the Convention by a United States naval officer.

Evidently the representative thought he had done no more than a republican duty, to make emphatic to the citizens of France the favour in which his country, from President to people, held the principles of the French Revolution. To read his instructions

and his address is evidence enough that the young diplomatist was not as sensitive to the location of the line of freedom and ease to which he might advance without betraying the dignity of the United States as his government had fancied him to be.

The address was as follows:—

"Citizens, President, and Representatives of the French People:—My admission into this assembly in the presence of the French nation (for all the citizens of France are represented here) to be recognised as the representative of the Republic, impresses me with a degree of sensibility which I cannot express. I consider it a new proof of that friendship and regard which the French nation has always shown to their ally, the United States of America.

"Republics should approach to each other. In many respects they have all the same interests; but this is more especially the case with the American and French Republics. Their governments are similar; they both cherish the same principles, and rest on the same basis, the equal and inalienable rights of man. The recollection, too, of common dangers and difficulties will increase their harmony and cement their union. America had her day of oppression, difficulty and war; but her sons were virtuous and brave, and the storm which clouded her political horizon has passed and left them in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and independence. France, our ally and our friend, and who aided in the contest, has now embarked in the same noble career; and I am happy to add that, whilst the fortitude, magnanimity, and heroic valour of her troops command the admiration and applause of the astonished world, the wisdom and firmness of her councils unite equally in securing the happiest result.

"America is not an unfeeling spectator of your affairs at the present crisis. I lay before you, in the declarations of every department of our government —declarations which are founded in the affections of the citizens at large,—the most decided proof of her sincere attachment to the liberty, prosperity, and happiness of the French Republic. Each branch of the Congress, according to the course of proceeding there, has requested the President to make this known to you in its behalf; and, in fulfilling the desires of those branches, I am instructed to declare to you that he has expressed his own.

"In discharging the duties of the office which I am now called to execute, I promise myself the highest satisfaction, because I well know that, whilst I pursue the dictates of my own heart, in wishing the liberty and happiness of the French nation, and which I most sincerely do, I speak the sentiments of my own country; and that by doing everything in my power to preserve and perpetuate the harmony so happily subsisting between the two Republics, I shall promote the interest of both. To this great object, therefore, all my efforts will be directed. If I can be so fortunate as to succeed in such manner as to merit the approbation of both Republics, I shall deem it the happiest event of my life, and retire hereafter with a consolation which those who mean well, and have served the cause of liberty, alone can feel."

In 1800 news was a slow traveller back and forth across the Atlantic, and diplomacy had to wait. The foreign envoy must rely first upon the instructions which he had in his pocket on leaving home, and then for months live by his wits. But censure was none the less sure for delay. It came bitingly to Monroe

in the despatch which Randolph sent on learning how he had acquitted himself in the accolade scene.

Randolph wrote:—"When you left us we all supposed that your reception as the minister of the United States would take place in the private chamber of some committee. Your letter of credence contained the degree of profession which government was desirous of making; and though the language of it would not have been cooled, even if its subsequent publicity had been foreseen, still it was natural to expect that the remarks with which you might accompany its delivery would be merely oral, and therefore not exposed to the rancorous criticisms of the nations at war with France.

"It seems that upon your arrival the downfall of Robespierre and the suspension of the usual routine of business, combined, perhaps, with an anxiety to demonstrate an affection to the United States, had shut up for a time the diplomatic cabinet, and rendered the hall of the National Convention the theatre of diplomatic civilities. We should have supposed that an introduction there would have brought to mind these ideas: 'The United States are neutral; the allied Powers jealous; with England we are now in treaty; by England we have been impeached for breaches of faith in favour of France; our citizens are notoriously Gallican in their hearts; it will be wise to hazard as little as possible on the score of good humour; and therefore in the disclosure of my feelings something is due to the possibility of fostering new suspicions.' Under the influence of these sentiments, we should have hoped that your address to the National Convention would have been so framed as to leave heart-burning nowhere. If private affection

and opinions had been the only points to be consulted, it would have been immaterial where or how they were delivered. But the range of a public minister's mind will go to all the relations of our country with the whole world. We do not percieve that your instructions have imposed upon you the extreme glow of some parts of your address; and my letter in behalf of the House of Representatives, which has been considered by some gentlemen as too strong, was not to be viewed in any other light than as executing the task assigned by that body.

"After these remarks, which are never to be interpreted into any dereliction of the French cause, I must observe to you that they are made principally to recommend caution, lest we should be obliged at some time or other to explain away or disavow an excess of fervor, so as to reduce it down to the cool system of neutrality. You have it still in charge to cultivate the French Republic with zeal, but without any unnecessary *eclat*; because the dictates of sincerity do not demand that we should render notorious all our feelings in favour of that nation."

The pen of this Virginian statesman was caustic enough, and if Monroe had previously experienced the liberty of a free lance, this communication from home was calculated to make him feel the tether of a public servant. He had, meanwhile, urged redress for outraged merchantmen, but the Directory was inattentive to claims, and moreover, was suspicious of the treaty which the American minister was pushing in London. When Monroe himself came to know the purport of this treaty with England, he found it worse than his fears, and he privately declared the transaction to be the most shameful he had ever known of the kind. Naturally, France was ready to

receive any treaty with England as a direct insult to herself; this one, she found, averted the danger of war between her rival and the United States, for it distinctly favoured England; and the Directory did not hesitate to declare to Monroe that France was therefore released from the alliance made in 1778. Monroe's assurances of American friendship were idle.

At home his failure was deemed a token of lukewarmness towards the administration which he represented. Party opponents blamed him for accepting the mission which Washington had offered to him expressly as a pronounced Republican. Because the position proved to be awkward he was considered to have misbehaved. It is clear that Monroe at this time had not the mind or character for strong nonpartisan work, but that is far from declaring him to have been dishonest, unpatriotic, or a man of mean spirit.

Censures were at length followed by a notification that he was superseded by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Plainly the recalled minister returned to America feeling that the administration had wronged him. He challenged the Secretary of State, then Mr. Pickering, to give the reasons for his recall, speaking with warmth of the blessings of an honest fame. The Secretary was not moved to discuss executive acts, leaving Monroe to the foolish, and that time fashionable, course of a public appeal. He very soon published "A View of the Conduct of the Executive," a long pamphlet in which he reviewed his diplomatic course and its relation to the administration. Washington's copy of the "View," with his own comments on each paragraph, is still preserved. These notes tell the story of the self-repression which

marked Washington's public life. Stung by the misrepresentation which he felt he was suffering at the hands of his own minister, he kept quiet, with these library annotations as his only reply. One expression summarises his feeling in regard to Monroe's mission: "The truth is, Mr. Monroe was cajoled, flattered, and made to believe strange things. In return he did, or was disposed to do, whatever was pleasing to that nation, reluctantly urging the rights of his own."

After the election of Jefferson, Fisher Ames had written, "Monroe will, if he likes, return to France to embrace liberty again." This sarcasm was prophetic. Monroe had been made governor of Virginia and had been twice reëlected, and Washington was dead, when Jefferson selected his friend to be minister extraordinary to France and Spain for the most notable negotiation of many decades.

A complete turn of the wheel brought Monroe's vindication; his failure had been largely a matter of unluckiness, and his new opportunity seemed largely a matter of luck. Yet at the same time Monroe was a growing man, and his wiser years were the product of the lessons of experience. One reason why Jefferson made Monroe a special envoy on this Louisiana mission was to silence the Federalists who had tried to embarrass the administration by great solicitude for the unfortunate Americans along the Mississippi; Monroe's important errand proved the earnestness of the administration to have the mouth of the river American property. But the deepest reason for the sending of Monroe was Jefferson's own profound hope for success in winning the imperial domain, and he believed Monroe would materially aid in that consummation.

Monroe's personal relation to the purchase of Louisiana from Bonaparte is all that is pertinent here, however, since its political aspect has been previously discussed. He was now wiser by several years than when he betrayed that undue complaisance before the Convention; he was this time in accord with his superiors and ardent for the object of his special mission, knowing fully the popular feeling in the West which recent events in Louisiana had stirred. When he reached Paris, Livingston had already gained the ear of the First Consul, whose sudden abandonment of colonial enterprise favoured rapid bargaining. But the new colleague was just in time to take part in the barter, and possibly acted to some degree as that fresh force which Jefferson had divined would be timely in clinching a great stroke. Not until after the bargain had been made was Monroe presented to Bonaparte; the signing of the conventions followed, and the envoy soon took leave of St. Cloud and Paris.

Monroe, sure of more than his share of the honour of this transaction, appeared to deprecate any rivalry between himself and Livingston. He intimated that they both were little more than agents of that haughty will which asked no advice and cared nothing for diplomacy. Livingston, however, was anxious for a just recognition of his services, which he reckoned had accomplished the whole, without aid of any colleague. In an explanatory letter to Madison he wrote: " . . . . It is known to every one here that the Consul had taken his resolution to sell previous to Mr. Monroe's arrival. It is a fact well known that M. Marbois was authorised, informally, by the First Consul, to treat with me before

Mr. Monroe reached Paris; that he actually made me the very proposition we ultimately agreed to, before Mr. Monroe had seen a minister, except M. Marbois for a moment at my house, where he came to make the proposition, Mr. Monroe not having been presented to M. Talleyrand, to whom I introduced him the afternoon of the next day. All, then, that remained to negotiate after his arrival was a diminution of the price, and in this our joint mission was unfortunate; for we came up, as soon as Mr. Monroe's illness would suffer him to do business after a few days' delay, to the minister's offers. There is no doubt that Mr. Monroe's talents and address would have enabled him, had he been placed in my circumstances, to have effected what I have done. But he, unfortunately, came too late to do more than assent to the propositions that were made us, and to aid in reducing them to form."

Monroe's commission abroad included three diplomatic tasks: negotiation for the Mississippi, which was now accomplished; a further purchase of the Floridas from Spain; and last, the framing of a new convention with Great Britain, to take the place of the memorable Jay treaty which had expired. Monroe had discovered while at Paris that Spain was not in a mood to part with more of her territory in America. Accordingly, he proceeded first to the scarcely less promising work at London. Progress towards a satisfactory treaty there was slow; the home government failed to note any at all. During a dead lull in the British negotiation he set off for Madrid, where he worked for a few months to aid the resident minister in a settlement for the coveted Spanish possessions. But they accomplished nothing.

When Monroe got back to London there was a new disappointment to his private ambition. A colleague, William Pinkney, arrived. Jefferson had sent him to strengthen the embassy, just as he had sent Monroe to reënforce Livingston. Nevertheless, Monroe cordially bent himself to cooperate with his new colleague in assiduous labour with the British commissioners for reaching a maritime agreement. The work of these months Jefferson boldly rejected, because it purposely avoided the great wrong of impressment, and promised no redress for unjust seizures. The American envoys suffered the chagrin of finding the temporising treaty, which was the best they could make, unacceptable to their government. Napoleon's Berlin and Milan Decrees had forced the English commissioners into a more uncompromising attitude than their personal friendliness had led Monroe to expect.

Lord Holland, one of these commissioners, has left in his memoirs of the Whig party a very sincere account of the negotiation. His picture of Mr. Monroe impresses the reader with its candour. Frankly admitting the peremptory seizure of a prodigious number of American neutrals, which, added to long mismanagement on the part of the English, had aggravated hostile feeling in America, he goes on to speak of the two Americans with whom he and his colleagues worked for a treaty of commerce:—

"We found the two American commissioners fair, explicit, frank and intelligent. Mr. Monroe (afterwards president) was a sincere Republican, who during the Revolution in France had imbibed a strong predilection for that country, and no slight aversion to this. But he had candour and principle. A nearer view of the consular and imperial government

of France, and of our Constitution in England, converted him from both these opinions. 'I find,' said he to me, 'your monarchy more republican than monarchical, and the French Republic infinitely more monarchical than your monarchy.' He was plain in his manners and slow in his apprehension; but he was a diligent, earnest, sensible, and even profound man. His colleague, who had been partly educated in England and was a lawyer by profession, had more of the forms and readiness of business, and greater knowledge and cultivation of mind; but perhaps his opinions were neither so firmly rooted nor so deeply considered as those of Mr. Monroe. Throughout our negotiation they were conciliatory, both in form and in substance. They exceeded their instructions by signing a treaty which left the article of impressment unsettled. My colleague and I took credit to ourselves for having convinced them of the extreme difficulty of the subject, arising from the impossibility of our allowing seamen to withdraw themselves from our service during war, and from the inefficacy of all the regulations which they had been enabled to propose for preventing their entering into American ships. They, on the other hand, persuaded us that they were themselves sincere in wishing to prevent it; and we saw no reason for suspecting that the government of the United States was less so. But though they professed, and I believe felt, a strong wish to enforce such a provision, they did not convince us that they had the power or the means of enforcing it. There was consequently no article in the treaty upon the subject. Upon this omission, and upon other more frivolous pretexts, but with the real purpose and effect of defeating Mr. Monroe's views on the presidentship, Mr. Jefferson refused to

ratify a treaty which would have secured his countrymen from all further vexations and prevented a war between two nations, whose habits, language and interests should unite them in perpetual alliance and good-fellowship."

Monroe had partisan friends at home who filled his mind with suspicions of Jefferson and Madison. They wanted him to return and openly take the field against Madison in the next presidential election. This he could not quite make up his mind to do. Jefferson's assurances would not allow him to become soured, and there was no evidence that Madison was trying to checkmate him. Harassed by debt and disappointed by failure, he was glad to be allowed to return to Virginia, but in a frame of mind quite opposite to the buoyancy in which he set out for France four years before. He again defended his foreign course in a copious letter to the Secretary of State.

The Congressional caucus had nominated Mr. Madison before Monroe, under the influence of Jefferson, withdrew from the candidacy. He then nominally acquiesced in supporting the election of his friend. He reëntered politics in his own State by serving for a third time in the assembly. After a brief term there he was again elected governor of Virginia. The confidence which his own people thus expressed in him must have been a grateful balm to irritated feelings. They had taken him up after his recall from France, in 1797, suffering under the displeasure of the administration, and had kept him their chief magistrate for three terms; and this time, wounded in the house of his friends, he found his own State again ready to endorse him politically. This second administration was short, for he was called from the

governor's chair to reënter national politics as a member of Madison's cabinet.

A disturbing event of his first administration as governor, worthy of mention, had been the conspiracy of a thousand slaves, an uprising which threatened to attack Richmond and to murder the whites. The plot was disclosed to the city by a black. Governor Monroe called out the militia and prepared to meet the collected insurgents, who soon recognised that they had been betrayed. Retribution fell heavy and wide for a time, but clemency soon supplanted justice in the feelings of the endangered community.

When war was imminent, President Madison at last made the important change in his cabinet which ended opposition there and brought Monroe to his side as Secretary of State, to be later Secretary of War as well. This open reconcilement of the late presidential rivals had begun when Monroe, a candidate for governor, lately declared himself a supporter of the administration. It was regarded by their patron, the still watchful Jefferson, with complacence, for he was interested in the fortunes of Monroe only less than in those of Madison, and desired another Virginia succession.

Whatever views the new Secretary of State had entertained while in London, seeking peaceable arbitrament, or whatever hopes he had in entering the cabinet that by a less limp policy he could give vigour to the State Department and possibly avert drifting into war,—all of these proved futile in the new position. He could do nothing but tack and trim for a time, between the English and the French ministers, while the war current surely swept along the whole peace cabinet. With Gallatin, he had to pocket his judgment.

When the days of the war were darkest, Monroe was naturally disturbed by the incompetency of the War Department, and of the chief officers in the field. He offered either to go to the front, or to take himself the war portfolio. But the project to make him generalissimo failed, and he was kept where he was until the disgrace of Bladensburg and the burning of Washington forced the President to a prompt dismission of the scapegoat, Secretary Armstrong. Then Monroe began to direct the affairs of war. He was not sorry to be rid of Armstrong's company in the cabinet, for he had distrusted him from the start; moreover, his own position at present was little more than a sinecure. Small credit can be gleaned for Monroe in "the affair of the twenty-fourth," as he referred to the battle of Bladensburg. A mounted cabinet is likely at any time to be in the way on a battle-field. But after the humiliating fiasco, his confident ardour was just the alarm needed to rally the country to defense. He sent spirited despatches to Jackson and to the governors in the Southwest; and they brought response in the battle of New Orleans.

CHAPTER X.

THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING.

"'Tis what our President, Monroe,
Has called 'the era of good feeling'",

wrote the poet Halleck in "Alnwick Castle," choosing to give as the President's own words a current expression. The *Boston Sentinel* first used it as the heading of a leading article, when, in July of 1817, the President's visit was working a miracle of good fellowship in Federalist Boston.

It was a cheerful statement of the good-natured relief which all sorts and conditions of citizens experienced after the war was over.

Good luck, which was always chasing Monroe, had again overtaken him. The blunder of Bladensburg was not remembered against him. As Secretary of State he was, in the old phrase, "in the line of safe presidents." It was possible, therefore, for his powerful friends to get him the Republican nomination in the Congressional caucus,—a method of nomination, the advisability of which, by the way, was just beginning to be questioned. The nomination being obtained, he was easily elected by his party, which had absorbed nearly the whole country. Once elected, it was natural that he should become very popular as the chief magistrate of the era of good feeling.

According to the accounts which his friends have given, Mr. Monroe represented excellently, in his

personal appearance, a typical citizen of the Western world; a man of fine, enduring physique, tall, broad-shouldered and raw-boned; with face strongly marked and rugged, eyes blue and kindly; in manner awkward and diffident, yet dignified and habitually courteous. In many characteristics Monroe was also typical of the life of the masses. Although he belonged by training to the race of statesmen, he was preëminently a man of strong feelings and of action. He was mediocre where Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson and Madison excelled. He was the opposite of prudent by nature, he was not boldly constructive, he was not subtle in politics, nor was he minutely and deeply learned. He bore the mark of battles fought and lost. His self-control and patience were heroic, because acquired. He had many times been unsuccessful, but simplicity, honesty, patriotism and duty had persevered, as any beholder could see written on his face. A rustic from north, west or south, would have felt at once that he was the right kind of man. He had the faults and virtues which together average well in the sum of appreciable character.

The new President took into his cabinet a notable group of men. His purpose to be thus surrounded evinces in itself his own wise strength. John Quincy Adams became the Secretary of State. This son of the ex-President, still living, was just fifty years old; but he was as much of a veteran in public and foreign service as Monroe himself. He was a trained scholar of diplomacy; in mere boyhood he had been with his father in Paris and with Mr. Dana in St. Petersburg; Washington sent him as minister to Holland; his father appointed him to Prussia; and Madison continued to keep him abroad at the courts of Russia and

England. He was academically educated and technically equipped; the country afforded no other man more fit for the chief secretaryship. President Monroe had to choose between him and Henry Clay, whose claims for the place were strongly urged by his friends. Both Clay and Adams were in training for the presidency; the former was to be celebrated for his repeatedly disappointed ambition, while the latter, after eight years of very able management of the State department, was to have his step.

The Secretary of War was John C. Calhoun, a South Carolinian, an Irish Presbyterian, a Yale graduate, a yeasty compound of whom President Dwight of Yale had prophesied that he would one day be President of the United States. He had previously been before the country only as a member of the House of Representatives, but there he had, from his entrance, spoken with authority and commanded a decided following. He was devoted to Monroe and, at this time, to the Union. He had ambition, he had principle, and he had no fear. It was a national calamity that the first of these qualities should have eventually so governed him that in his wanton willingness to sacrifice his first love, the Union, he could be called "the great apostate." At this time he impressed Adams as "of enlarged philosophical views and of ardent patriotism." He was young and was not deterred from accepting the portfolio of War because Clay had just petulantly declined it, and because Jackson and Lowndes had not found it an attractive offer.

William Crawford was retained as head of the Treasury department. The magnanimity with which Monroe thus continued in office his crowding rival was poorly rewarded. The ambitious Georgian was

not nicely scrupulous, like his companions in the cabinet, and was capable of stabbing a forbearing chief.

The prosecutor of Aaron Burr and memoirist of Patrick Henry, William Wirt, was made Attorney-general, an office which he held for twelve years, discharging its duties ably, and increasing his professional renown.

Outside the cabinet, Jefferson and Madison remained the firmest friends and most disinterested counsellors of the administration. Clay, more popular as the leader of the House of Representatives than ever before—he had been almost unanimously elected Speaker in the new Congress—was beginning to show a semi-hostility, for he had been deeply hurt when Monroe did not select him to be Secretary of State. He refused the use of the chamber of the House for the inauguration ceremonies on this account, it was asserted, and he was alone, of all Washington society, absent on that civic day. The President-elect gave his manuscript address and took the oath of office from an elevated platform in front of the Congressional building,—for the Capitol, burned by the British was not yet rebuilt. This was the first open-air inauguration since that of Washington, in 1789, and Capitol Hill was said to have been bathed in warm sunshine—a rare feature in the March inaugurations.

The list of variously eminent men of that period who moved before the public eye is remarkable, and they gave an accumulation of prestige to the administration, for nearly all were Republicans in name. Just here may be noticed the curiosity of party transformation. As the Republican party had increased in numbers, it had more and more openly

assumed tenet after tenet of the old Federalism. The Federalists had seen themselves decrease, as their principles were being absorbed by their victorious rivals. Monroe and Clay were, in principle, moderate Federalists; they believed in national defences, a navy, a protective tariff, a national bank, and internal improvements. These views could never have been legitimately deduced from the orthodox Democratic doctrine of strict construction of the Constitution. Jefferson at Monticello witnessed these progressive assumptions of Federalist doctrine by his party without protest.

General Jackson, of all men, was least a disciple of the old Democracy. He preferred to be little in touch with Jefferson, the passing leader of the old school. One party could scarcely have contained the two, had their national activities coincided in time or spot. Jackson grew a rank popularity among the pioneers of his adopted Tennessee, but he made little use of this enthusiastic support until after Jefferson died, in 1825. He had favoured Monroe for president because he hated Crawford, and he continued to be a friend to the administration, although at times a difficult one. His early advice to the President indicates that he over-estimated Monroe's pliancy. He had to discover that Monroe's mature kindliness was open to advice but did not accept dictation. The President at the same time corresponded frankly with his general, feeling secure in his attachment and anxious for sectional support.

Monroe celebrated his entrance into office by a grand tour of the country. This was an innovation, and it was a prodigious undertaking in that day; but it accorded well with the new spirit of nationality, and the effect was very wholesome. The itinerary

embraced the northeastern and northwestern departments of the Union; the seaboard towns of the Atlantic were visited as far as Portland; New Hampshire, Vermont and New York were traversed, with stops along the line of the fresh water defences on the north; Lake Erie was crossed to Detroit; and from thence the route turned homeward, through Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland. The President travelled by carriage and by water for more than three months, accompanied only by his private secretary and by General Joseph G. Swift, the chief engineer of the War department. The ostensible object of the arduous excursion was to examine the new fortifications of the coast and inland frontier, but this aim was not incompatible with the spirit of conciliation which Monroe evinced with heartiness everywhere. And the response of the cities, the villages, and the countryside through which he passed was spontaneous and enthusiastic. The chief magistrate and the people were in contact for the first time since Washington, who made a similar trip. The celebrations and receptions were organised with pomp and adorned with oratory. The contemporaneous accounts of them are equally stately. The President was carefully attired for this trip in the undress uniform of an officer of the Revolutionary War,—cocked hat, blue coat with facings, and buff small-clothes. His replies to the ceremonious speeches of welcome were considered to be "elegant and impressive." The Windsor Female Academy greeted him in an address which closed in the characteristic rhetoric of the period: "That success may crown all your exertions for the public good is the ardent wish of many a patriotic though youthful female bosom." In high gratification at the evidences of fidelity and union

which his tour had afforded, and acknowledging himself to be a wiser man for it, Monroe returned to the capital, where he went to occupy the White House. The mansion, rebuilt after the original plan, though still far from completed, was by that time ready to shelter the presidential family.

The President's travels had reminded him vividly of the pressing need of easy thoroughfares in uniting the country and in opening up new districts to pioneer families. Better means of travel and transportation had begun to be a very stirring question. Steamboats were now plying on the Hudson, the Delaware, and the Mississippi. Improved stage-coaches were making the unprecedented time of six miles an hour. Henry Clay in Congress had awakened large interest in the Cumberland Road, which aimed to throw open the West to the wagon trains of new settlers. Governor Clinton, of New York, was urging on the momentous project of the Erie Canal, which was to extend for three hundred miles through the State, and connect the great lakes with the tide water. This enterprise was ridiculed by many, and the work was believed to be impracticable by a large portion of the people. As Monroe passed through the State, the feasibility of "Clinton's folly" was under discussion.

Although in hearty accord with advancing ideas of the time on the subject of improved communication, the President nevertheless did not believe that Congress had the constitutional right to undertake "internal improvements," as these works were generally called. In this view he followed President Madison, one of whose last official acts had been to veto the "Bonus Bill," which sought to provide a special and permanent fund for federal improvements. The State of New York had hoped to get some of this

money for its own Erie Canal; but it was left to dig its ditch without benefit of Congress. Monroe, however, in his attitude towards similar demands, was more suggestive than his predecessor. In his first annual message, though he admitted that Congress was not competent to use public money for internal improvements, he declared a belief that it should be enabled to do so, and he recommended an amendment of the Constitution giving it the power. Again, in 1822, when he reluctantly vetoed a bill for repairing the Cumberland or "national road," he expressed the same views in a long and elaborate paper.

One of the early and agitating subjects which claimed Monroe's attention was the border warfare in the South during 1817-18. This was called the Seminole War, and was conducted in person by General Jackson. The political importance which it later assumed in campaign politics belongs to the history of President Jackson; but it is also linked with the executive responsibility of Monroe, and its narrative must accordingly be recited in the history of this administration.

As a campaign it was not remarkable except for its consequences, and for the ultra-vigorous national policy which the hero of New Orleans personally imposed. Afterwards he was willing to shift much of the responsibility upon Monroe.

The Seminoles, or "Wanderers," were a nation of errant Indians who had gone southward beyond the borders of the United States. They were sometimes allies of England, and again under Spanish influence. Their number had been increased by refugee Creeks, and hundreds of runaway negroes shared their predatory habits. The whole horde could always be relied on for unfriendliness to the backwoodsmen of

Georgia. They were desperate neighbours who could not be placated and whose depredations could not be long tolerated by any watchful government. Between the conquest of the Creeks by Jackson in 1814 and this time, these hostile bands had been armed and fortified by British connivance, and encouraged to expect that lands given up by the Indians to the United States by treaty, would be restored to them in the general settlement between England and the United States.

It was soon apparent that if Spain would not or could not suppress the nuisance, the government of the United States must again pursue a campaign against the savage banditti, even if this should lead into the foreign territory from which they operated.

Fighting began with the destruction of a negro fort. The Seminoles were awed for a short time by the carnage of this affair, but they began again to harry the white settlers along the debatable strip. A small United States force destroyed a village of the hostiles, who retaliated by a massacre of some forty soldiers, women and children, on the Appalachicola river. Thereupon the President ordered General Jackson to gather militia from Tennessee and Georgia, and to take command of the regular troops already at the border.

Jackson had already had his eye upon Florida, and had urged the President to seize it as indemnity for the outrages of Spain upon the property of citizens of the United States. He thought such an act could be executed without implicating the government. "Let it," wrote he, "be signified to me through any channel (say Mr. J. Rhea) that the possession of the Floridas would be desirable to the United States, and in sixty days it will be accomplished." There are

two opposing accounts of how this letter was received by the President. One, gathered from the Monroe correspondence, denies any authorising reply to this proposal; while Jackson's story was that he received, before taking the field, Monroe's approval of his plan through Mr. Rhea.

But with or without authority, Jackson had resolved to invade the Floridas. He scattered the Seminoles as he marched to St. Mark's, the Spanish post. This he captured, with small concern for pretext, and raised the American flag over it. He then marched for the Indian village Suwanee, where a formidable band of half-breeds and outlaws were gathered. These had received warning from Arbuthnot, a British trader, and Jackson's troops found but a deserted town. Arbuthnot and Ambrister, another Englishman regarded as an accomplice, were captured, tried by a court-martial and executed. Hearing that Pensacola was harbouring refugee Indians, Jackson appeared before that Spanish stronghold, which he seized in spite of the governor's protest.

Here ended the acts of the general, but there was much to follow when the news of it all reached Washington. The Spanish minister protested solemnly against the lawless violation of Spanish soil, and demanded a prompt restitution of St. Mark's and Pensacola. Monroe and his cabinet were in long consultation over a reply which would disavow Jackson's acts and at the same time maintain their necessity. Such an one Monroe at last drafted, as the basis of Adam's reply. The United States demanded the punishment of Spanish officers for their hostility, and offered to deliver St. Mark's and Pensacola.

Congress having assembled, the President sent remarks on affairs in Florida to the House and to the

Senate. Thereupon Jackson and his war were discussed in the House for twenty-seven days uninterruptedly. Henry Clay made a great speech warning the people against the military hero covered with glory, and against the sanction of military insubordination. But Jackson had upholders who riddled the arguments of the orator, and when the vote came, the self-willed and popular general had won. The President seems to have acted wisely and honestly during the dilemma. He was anxious to be considerate of Jackson's sensitive feelings; he was sensible of the advantages to be reaped from the bold campaign, and he was influenced by Adams. But at the same time he deprecated the course as unauthorised, and desired to be fair to the foreign neighbour.

The failure of Congressional censure emphasised Jackson's popularity. He visited Washington, Philadelphia and New York, not as a hangman but as a hero.

The arbitrary policy thus approved, helped instead of hindering the barter for Florida. Monroe and Adams steadily persisted in the negotiation with Luis de Onis, the Spanish envoy, pressing and yielding boundary claims until finally the agreement was struck, which gave to the United States the two Floridas. The disputed territory of Texas became Spain's; the United States paid five millions of dollars to satisfy the claims of her own citizens against Spain, and relinquished all other claims on Spain for damages. The treaty was ratified unanimously by the Senate on February 22, 1819, and, after a short Spanish delay of two years, by King Ferdinand.

The story of the Missouri Compromise is one of the most interesting in Washington history. But it belongs to legislative rather than to administrative

annals, and as a parliamentary discussion extending over the last two years of Monroe's first term, it is impossible to present it at the same time briefly and comprehensively. But in its historical and philosophical bearing it is capable of direct interpretation. It was a serious political issue which seemed to affect the administration very little. When the struggle came on, Monroe himself was cool and cautious, at the same time confident that substantial forces were at work to produce a compromise,—though in a private letter he stated a belief that "the majority of States, of physical force, and eventually of votes in both Houses, would be on the side of the non-slave-holding States."

Federalism has been spoken of as dead, but it must be remembered that it was the death that has a thousand lives. Sectional rivalry was a perennial shoot, and had always a tendency to unite those in the North who were suspicious of the compact democracy of the South, and were at odds with Virginia rule. Thus, the watchful North had complained of the three-fifths representation of negroes, of the Louisiana Purchase, and of the admission of the State of Orleans,—all as a concession to Southern ascendancy. And now came on an occasion which the irreconcilable Federalists scarcely had to press in reanimating throughout the North the anti-slavery sentiment which had long been sleeping.

Missouri was seeking admission into the Union. Here was already a slave-holding population, settled west of the Mississippi in the Louisiana grant. The issue was suddenly before Congress—Should it admit any but free States from territory purchased out of the Federal treasury? Ought not the territorial Ordinance of 1787 against slavery to extend across

the Mississippi, in the name of right and of a free land? Did not the original Southern States themselves consider their institution of slavery to be an evil?

So here was a tribunal in which, on the one side, stood the South, to defend what it had up to this time claimed to wish to see abolished; and on the other side a coalescing North. The deeps of sentiment and interest were stirred in the Congressional debates which followed, while throughout the whole country feeling spread and intensified. State legislatures vehemently took part. The North, breaking party lines, united against the admission of Missouri except as a free State; the South upheld Missouri's claims to unrestriction. The strategy of Clay, the violence of John Randolph, Pinckney's art and Rufus King's constitutional argument figured conspicuously in the House and in the Senate. A bill to admit Maine as a State was also before Congress. This simultaneous application was made to play an important part in the controversy. Clay took the floor to fight the admission of the Northern State. "A State in the quarter of country from which I come," he said, "asks to be admitted into the Union. What say the gentlemen who ask the admission of Maine? Why, they will not admit Missouri without a condition which strips her of one essential attribute of sovereignty. What, then, do I say to them? That justice is due to all parts of the Union. Equality is equality, and if it is right to make the restriction of slavery the condition of admission of Missouri, it is equally just to make the admission of Missouri the condition of that of Maine."

It all resulted in a compromise, Mr. Clay's adroit effort. John Randolph called it "a dirty bargain,"

and denounced the Northern men who helped carry it as "dough-faces,"—a term which was used for the next forty years to designate a Northern man with Southern principles. The bill to admit Missouri with her slaves finally passed both Houses, but amended by a territorial proviso which shut slavery forever from the remaining tract of country ceded by France under the name of Louisiana, north of the line 36° 30′,—the southern boundary of Missouri. This was the famous Missouri Compromise, and the line established was maintained for thirty years against the encroachments of slavery.

Before signing the "Enabling Act" for Missouri, Monroe had to satisfy himself on a constitutional point. Had Congress any power to impose any restriction of any kind on any State admitted into the Union? He proposed two questions to his cabinet,—Was it constitutional to prohibit slavery in a Territory?—and, Was the term "forever" in the prohibitive amendment to be understood as only a territorial forever, or as extending to the Territory when erected into a State? To the first question all agreed, Yes; but upon the application of the word "forever" Adams differed from his Southern colleagues. Thereupon the second question was changed to an inquiry merely,—Was the proviso consistent with the Constitution? To this each member said Yes, in writing, and Monroe gave his signature to the act in March, 1820.

Obnoxious clauses in the State constitution which Missouri adopted brought on another contest in the autumn. There were more weeks of discussion, and then another compromise ended the long wrangle.

Although the free-soil men were mortified and the South was jubilant over the admission of Missouri

as a slave State, yet the Compromise must be counted as a distinct strategic gain for the North. It was a far prescience by which Northern statesmen perceived the eventual danger of the extension of slavery on the rear. Little by little, it would have crept northward, west of the Mississippi, until it made a solid wall to the west as well as the south,—a cordon of great oligarchies united in the support of the institution which gave them such disproportionate franchise in Congress. But the Compromise imposed a barrier which kept slavery to arid and uninviting zones, while the best emigration had time to form powerful free States out of the protected Northwest.

On the other hand, the intense struggle over Missouri had the effect to solidify the South to a singleness of interest. There had not as yet been a general acceptance of slavery as a benign and beneficent institution, and many still abhorred it in theory. But the discussions at this time made very obvious its political advantage to each slave-holding State, and the Northern hostility towards it deepened a sectional stubbornness. Thenceforth, though the South was to be divided into political parties, there was to be one universal and imperious tenet,—slavery for the South and the South for slavery.

The Compromise was effected by specious and palliative arguments, which led most people at the time to believe that the danger of disunion over slavery was averted. But some saw the inevitableness of a decisive conflict. Secretary John Quincy Adams, destined to be in his old age a champion of liberty, touched the root when he wrote, at the moment, in his diary: "The impression produced on my mind by the progress of this discussion is, that the bargain between freedom and slavery contained

in the Constitution of the United States is morally and politically vicious, inconsistent with the principles upon which alone our Revolution can be justified." He favoured the Compromise because he held it to be all that could have been effected under the Constitution, and on account of his unwillingness to hazard the Union. He had misgivings lest this had not been the wiser course. "If the Union must be dissolved," he concludes his impressions, "slavery is precisely the question upon which it ought to break. For the present, however, this contest is laid asleep."

It was during Monroe's second term that he uttered the State paper which has given to his name its great distinguishment, both in his own country and throughout the world. This was the paper embodying the Monroe Doctrine.

It is a curious instance that President Monroe, whom not even the most sympathetic study is able to rank in originality with his predecessors in office, should be the one to give stated expression to an international doctrine which has continuously shaped the foreign policy of the United States, which has thrown a wall of protection around the Western hemisphere, and which has been regarded practically, if not formally, as an international law by the Old World.

The occasion of this celebrated utterance was in the designs of the so-called Holy Alliance of European governments to arrest the spread of republican principles in the South American countries, which at this time were establishing their independence. The Holy Alliance regarded these movements as pestilential, and dangerous to the European principles of hereditary rights. This unconcealed conspiracy on the continent was watched with jealous

alarm in England, and Canning wished that the United States might in some way bar the projects.

There was no need, however, of English urgency, and least of all of the league between the two nations which Canning suggested. Ever since the Revolution there had been a widening conviction in the United States that the Western hemisphere must be protected from the advance of monarchical principles; that the only proper American policy was to abstain from European broils, and no less to keep foreign broils from invading the West. Americans understood the enmity which the monarchies cherished against their democratic system, and were very keenly alive to any plot to circumscribe its peaceful action. Most of all, there had grown to be a general sentiment that it was the chief interest of the New World to be detached as much as possible from European politics. The two Americas had interests of their own which should be developed in their own independent ways.

Perhaps this conviction of the American people might not have been so general and so determined if they had not been the recent witnesses of the strange cycle of Napoleonic wars,—a whirlpool into which they had been drawn in spite of themselves; they were unanimous that neither glory nor advantage could come to this Continent from foreign entanglements, and that this Continent must be protected from their transference hither.

This sentiment had never been made a political issue; but a succession of official papers had embodied it more or less definitely; it had been a favourite theme in the correspondence of Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison; it had been a topic of familiar discussion among the people. European diplomat-

ists had been apprised that this was the American attitude, though they contemptuously ignored it. Now that the opportunity for public assertion came, the whole country was back of the President as it has seldom, if ever, been.

Monroe was not usually an engaging writer, not always clear, never pithy in style; yet this occasion, and the sense of the certainty of feeling behind him, enabled him to speak his mind in judicious yet vibrant words, which give honour to this most important American State deliverance after the Declaration of Independence.

The Doctrine occurs in the Annual Message of December 2, 1823, and is as follows:

I.

"At the proposal of the Russian Imperial government, made through the minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the minister of the United States at St. Petersburgh, to arrange, by amicable negotiation, the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this Continent. A similar proposal has been made by his Imperial Majesty to the government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The government of the United States has been desirous, by this friendly proceeding, of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor, and their solicitude to cultivate the best understanding with his government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in

which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Powers."

II.

"It was stated at the commencement of the last session that a great effort was then making in Spain and Portugal to improve the condition of the people of those countries, and that it appeared to be conducted with extraordinary moderation. It need scarcely be remarked that the result has been so far very different from what was then anticipated. Of events in that quarter of the globe, with which we have so much intercourse and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favour of the liberty and happiness of their fellow men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European Powers, in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced, that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defence. With the movements in this hemisphere we are, of necessity, more immediately connected and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied Powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective governments. And to the

defence of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States. In the war between those new governments and Spain we declared our neutrality at the time of their recognition, and to this we have adhered and shall continue to adhere, provided no change shall occur which, in the judgment of the competent authorities of this government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security.

"The late events in Spain and Portugal show that Europe is still unsettled. Of this important fact no stronger proof can be adduced than that the allied Powers should have thought it proper, on a principle satisfactory to themselves, to have interposed by force in the internal concerns of Spain. To what extent such interposition may be carried on the same

principle, is a question to which all independent Powers, whose governments differ from theirs, are interested; even those most remote, and surely none more so than the United States. Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its Powers; to consider the government *de facto* as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy; meeting, in all instances, the just claims of every Power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to these continents, circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied Powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference. If we look to the comparative strength and resources of Spain and those new governments, and their distance from each other, it must be observed that she can never subdue them. It is still the true policy of the United States to leave the parties to themselves, in the hope that other Powers will pursue the same course."

It is not probable that Monroe had any conception of the lasting weight of these words, nor that eventually they would enjoy the sanction accorded to international law. He was not unaware, however, that the declaration might be taken as a challenge, and

the United States might soon be required to give account for its unexpected demand that Europe cease to think of the two Americas as any longer a region for freebooting. The continental governments of Europe were indeed stunned by the audacity and candour of the announcement. For the first time they comprehended that a new Power had arisen in the West, whose wishes must be seriously regarded, —a Power that expressed its ideas with extraordinary clearness. The demand, however, was not unreasonable, and the nations were not seeking trouble. The conspiracy was dropped, and it was forty years before a European sovereign attempted to contravene the Monroe Doctrine; and it was in maintenance of this doctrine that Napoleon III. was required to withdraw his troops from Mexico. Now, after more than three-quarters of a century, Monroe's utterance has an accumulated moral force in international affairs which is measured by the importance of the great Republic.

The visit of the aged Marquis de Lafayette to the land of his knightly adoption, when he came to the aid of General Washington as the precursor of the French alliance, was the closing scene in Monroe's public life. Rarely does an event so stirring, and at the same time so fitting, complete a career. The President, about to retire from office, had been a comrade of the engaging young nobleman in Revolutionary days, more than forty years before. Both were striplings then,—now they gazed into each other's faces not, as then, to discover the beaming signs of youth and ambition, but the spiritual lines of suffering, rectitude, and kindness. There never was another such a visit before or since. The people were hearty without reserve, and when Lafayette first

realised what it was to be the nation's guest, he exclaimed, pressing his hands to his heart, "It will burst." He personified romantically to the people of the United States that ideal of conservative liberty which two peoples had striven after, with variant results.

When minister to France, Monroe had been a friend in distress to the prisoner at Olmütz, seeking his release and transmitting aid to Madame Lafayette from Washington. Now, as host, he was the same thoughtful friend. Jefferson had suggested that Congress should not merely dine this guest, sending him back empty-handed, and President Monroe, and others prominent in securing the distinguished visit, were mindful of a substantial token. This Congress unanimously gave when it voted Lafayette the sum of $200,000, together with a township of unappropriated public lands.

President Monroe retired from office March 4, 1825, to pass the six years remaining of life in his Virginia home at Oak Hill. The rare friendship of the three ex-presidents was there continued for another year; Jefferson was the first to go; Madison outlasted his younger friend by five years.

Monroe's family life was exceptionally happy. He had married, while a young member of Congress in New York, Miss Eliza Kortright, a belle of the later days of the Revolution, who possessed gracious manners and social position. She was called "la belle Americaine" when in Paris with her husband, and "regal-looking" at her levees in Washington. There were two equally fair daughters, Monroe's only children, who, as Mrs. Hay of Virginia, and Mrs. Gouverneur of New York, were accomplished hostesses in the White House during their father's long

residence there. The ways of new society in Washington became more regulated and ceremonious during the leadership of the Monroe ladies. Mrs. Madison's indefatigable attentiveness was not followed. Henceforth there were no more first calls from the White House; there were stated and select drawing-rooms; there were presidential dinners without wives; and other foreign etiquette obtained, which disturbed for a time cabinet councils and miscellaneous society. Monroe himself, though incapable of being governed by anything but kindness and common-sense, cultivated formality in executive relations; diplomatists no longer "dropped in" to the White House, as in the days of Jefferson, but were received with considerable state. Long experience had no doubt convinced him that foreign manners in this respect were wiser and the more salutary. With its rawness and its new selectness, the capital city was a unique social centre. Distinguished statesmen, officers of the army and navy, ambassadors and foreign travellers, touched with the homespun representatives from the most far-away pioneer districts. Among the marked figures were John Randolph of Roanoke, and Andrew Jackson; the former reckless, brilliant and grand-mannered, if he chose, the latter as striking a sensation in a drawing-room as the Duke of Wellington.

A history of the first half of the nineteenth century in America must observe the beginnings of original American literature, and it is in the calm of Monroe's administration that they first appear. Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin, genuine American products, belonged to the previous century, as did the writers on political philosophy who contributed *The Federalist* to the world. What they did, however, does not indicate specifically a national

impulse; and from them to the years which saw Bryant, Washington Irving and Cooper, as young men of promise, there was an uninteresting stretch when letters seemed to be without devotees. The struggle of politics was too exciting for culture, as an end in itself, to find its place. In the lull which followed there was produced a small grist of books which bespoke the genius of the New World. It may be imagined that Monroe's cabinet of university men turned from discussing Jackson's raid on live Indians to lose themselves in the pages of Cooper's novel, "The Spy." "The Sketch Book" was a late publication which was just finding its way from the book-lover's table to the fashionable drawing-room. The boy poet Bryant had voiced the stirrings toward real literature in the lofty strains of "Thanatopsis." The intellectual supremacy of New England also was about to assert itself unquestionably in the appearance of a school of poets, for Emerson, Longfellow and Whittier were in training, as well as Hawthorne.

The years of Monroe's retirement were harassed by the dwindling of his fortune. He had seriously impaired it during his two foreign missions, when government pay had not been equal to his expenditures, and he had never recovered from those losses. He presented his accounts and endeavoured to get from Congress a fair reimbursement in order to save his farm and die where he had lived among old friends. In his last year Congress granted a moderate sum, and later allowed to his children something for the papers which he possessed.

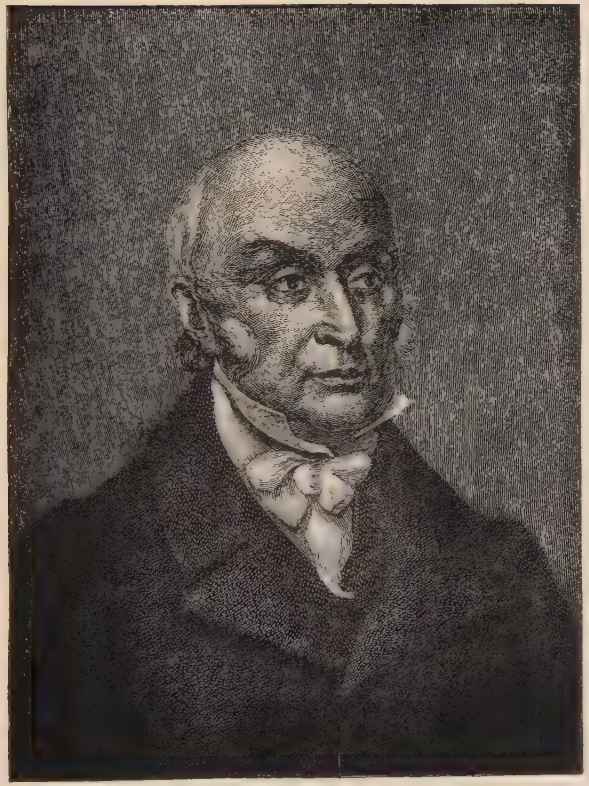
The ex-President died in New York at the home of his daughter, July 4, 1831. Among his contemporaries there were many faithful witnesses to his character and honourable career. John Quincy Adams

delivered a eulogy which was unrestrained in honour "of a mind anxious and unwearied in the pursuit of truth and right; patient of inquiry; patient of contradiction; courteous, even in the collision of sentiment; sound in its ultimate judgments and firm in its final conclusions." Calhoun unbent in warm praise of his chief. Madison estimated him thus: "His understanding was very much under-rated; his judgment was particularly good; few men have made more of what may be called sacrifices in the service of the public." Jefferson's well-known word was, "He is a man whose soul might be turned wrong side outwards without discovering a blemish to the world." Still more eloquently simple was another encomium by Jefferson—"honest and brave."

The "era of good feeling" is a happy phrase to characterise the state of mind throughout the country during the Monroe administration. It is not, however, to be too literally applied in Congress and among the members of the cabinet, especially during Monroe's second term. The pressure of a strong opposition being removed, the personal ambitions of prominent leaders had unrestrained activity and naturally became very loud issues. Monroe's reëlection in 1820 had been practically unanimous, but during the whole of his second term the coming election of 1824 disturbed the peace of his cabinet and of Congress. There were issues of division in the party. Some clung to strict constructions of the Constitution, which meant practically no national roads nor canals, and no increased protective tariff. Henry Clay led the loose constructionists, who wanted the great improvements, and desired to keep American markets for American goods.

The candidates to succeed Mr. Monroe were at

first reckoned to be as many as sixteen, but when minor aspirants had dropped out there were six. They were, John Quincy Adams, Calhoun, Clay, DeWitt Clinton, Crawford, and the military man, Andrew Jackson. There was then no way of handling the situation and of deciding which of the six candidates should be the candidate of the whole party and receive its enthusiastic support. The caucus, objected to in 1816 and dispensed with in 1820, was discussed in every State legislature and generally condemned. Resolutions from a county in Pennsylvania suggested "a convention from all the States of the Union" as the best method, but "entirely impracticable." About one-fourth of all the members of Congress at length assembled in caucus and nominated Crawford, who was unobtrusively favoured by Monroe. This had no effect upon the election, however, as electors were chosen to support all the candidates. Calhoun early withdrew, and only four strong candidates remained to the end. As every one had foreseen, there was no choice of President by the electors when their votes were counted before the assembled Congress in February. Jackson had ninety votes, Adams eighty-four, Crawford forty-one, and Clay, thirty-seven. The election, now confined to the three having the highest number, was thrown into the House, while the decision rested with Clay, who, though now thrown out of the contest, commanded the turning votes. In this test he was for Adams, who, thus reinforced, received the votes of a majority of the States, and was declared elected. John C. Calhoun was Vice-President-elect.



JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

(ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1825-1829.)

CHAPTER XI.

A PURITAN PRESIDENT

THE life of John Quincy Adams is political history almost from the start and to the very finish. The story of it is the study of a great performance—crescendo at the end—from the youngster, precocious in diplomacy, to the "Old Man Eloquent," a whirlwind of advanced views. Almost all other ex-presidents outlived lively interest on the part of the public, while in this man interest is stretched to its most imaginative pitch as he expires in the national House of Representatives.

He was the son of President John Adams, and a descendant from Henry Adams, a very early colonist "who took his flight from the Dragon Persecution in Devonshire, in England," as reads his monument in the Quincy burial-ground. By another line the Adamses came from John Alden of the *Mayflower*. The mother of John Quincy Adams was Abigail, daughter of Parson Smith, long settled over Braintree. Her son was named after her grandfather, John Quincy, who lay dying when the infant was

baptized. These circumstances, the namesake afterwards wrote, "have been among the strongest links of my attachment to the name of Quincy, and have been to me through life a perpetual admonition to do nothing unworthy of it." The child of this creditable ancestry was born near Boston, on July 11, 1767, in the North Parish of Braintree, since called Quincy.

Of invincible hereditary traits the younger Adams had certainly a lavish outfit. He is a distinguished instance of the persistence and compulsoriness of the puritanical type. He was only eleven years of age when he left the nurture of a strict home to accompany his father to France; and at fourteen he quitted his father and jaunted to remote Russia to begin his diplomatic tutelage. But though he could not have experienced altogether an orthodox New England training, he was first and last the unmistakable product of that soil. He was born to the rigid conscience and inflexible integrity which environment cannot alter. Earlier than this early transplanting the boy seems to have set for himself standards and purposes. Ambition was large in his mind, but it took the devout shape of an object in life. He was a patriotic republican from the cradle, for the cause was the absorbing talk at home since before his birth. The impressionable lad had heard from across the harbour the battle of Bunker Hill, and had watched from the Blue Hills the bombardment of Boston. He had been a little post-rider between that city and his mother's farm after the British had departed, and while his bold father was engaged in the Continental Congress. He wrote letters which we may deprecate as unchildlike, but the like of which are in no danger of being perpetrated by the children of this century. One of these prim epistles, written to his father at Philadelphia, closes with, "I am, dear Sir, with a

present determination of growing better, yours, John Quincy Adams"; while a postscript shows significantly the orderliness of his mental machinery:—"Sir, if you will be so good as to favor me with a Blank book, I will transcribe the most remarkable occurrences I meet with in my reading which will serve to fix them upon my mind."

The boy's travels abroad began when his father was sent to Paris on his first diplomatic mission. From France he writes to his "Honored Mamma" concerning his intention to keep a journal or diary of events, objects and characters, and that "my Pappa, who takes a great deal of pains to put me in the right way," advises also a little book. These he undertakes, humbly conscious that "a Journal Book and a letter Book of a Lad of Eleven years old Can not be expected to Contain much of Science, Literature, arts, wisdom or wit."

Later the journal was formally begun, bearing the date "Friday, 12th of November, 1779." Sixteen years, however, passed before the lad's purpose to follow his father's counsel settled into that regular record which has been called the Diary proper. Taking this date, 1795, and that of the last entry in 1848, there is comprehended an extraordinary career of more than fifty years, almost the entire first half of the present century. This Diary, abridged to twelve volumes, is a unique autobiography, the daily political history of the man of the times given in the soliloquy of a statesman. It throws a ruthless light on every passing event, and on nearly all the public personages. If this literary legacy be not exactly a humane document, it is beyond question of rare interest, and valuable to every student of that period. Unconsciously illuminating the pages appears the stubborn honesty of the writer; many foibles appear

also, not illuminating save as they fix candour as the Adams standpoint. The qualities of the man are to be sought in his own book, where they can be seen as plainly as the features of his face in one of his portraits; patriotism and political liberalism, honorable ambition, personal and political integrity, conscientiousness, ability, intelligence, indefatigability and steadfast will; these are unmistakable, and they outline a great figure.

Just as apparent in the Diary are the blemishes which isolated the man throughout his long life and prevented the popularity which his strength might otherwise have won. The men of his day were prejudiced against him, too frequently conceiving an aversion to him. Scarcely any one outside his family loved him, and it is not discoverable in the jottings of fifty years that he loved any one beyond that circle. He had not charity and he was vituperative. All this he reveals to us through an intimacy with his readers which was given to none of his contemporaries.

Of his son's improvement amid the new foreign surroundings John Adams recorded: "He has enjoyed perfect health from first to last, and is respected wherever he goes, for his vigor and vivacity both of mind and body; for his constant good humour, and for his rapid progress in French, as well as in general knowledge which for his age is uncommon." Once, when the travellers were returning from a brief sojourn at home, young John spent the weeks on shipboard in teaching English to the French minister and his secretary; and his father's diary has this entry: "The Chevalier de la Lucerne and M. Marbois are in raptures with my son. They get him to teach them the language. I found this morning the am-

bassador seated on the cushion in one stateroom, M. Marbois in his cot at his left hand, and my son stretched out in his at his right, the ambassador reading out loud in Blackstone's 'Discourse' at his entrance on his professorship of the common law at the university, and my son correcting the pronunciation of every word and syllable and letter. The ambassador said he was astonished at my son's knowledge; that he was a master of his own language like a professor. M. Marbois said, 'Your son teaches us more than you; he has *point de grace, point d' eloges.* He shows us no mercy and makes us no compliments. We must have Mr. John." The remarkable boy became a marked young man during the seven years which he passed abroad.

There was schooling, somewhat desultory, at Paris, Amsterdam and Leyden before the lad went, in his fifteenth year, to St. Petersburg, to be private secretary to Francis Dana. This bootless mission lasted fourteen months and could not have failed to enrich his youthful but carefully stored experience. It was followed by several months of travel before returning to Paris, where his father, with Franklin and Jefferson, was at work over the negotiations which secured Independence. The young man at once became useful as a clerk. It was a long reach of public service from this humble part in obtaining his country's independence to his majestic part in the agitation which precipitated the Civil War and the overthrow of slavery in the following century.

Upon his father's appointment as minister to England, young Adams himself decided that he ought to quit European cities and company to go back to get an orderly but at that time narrow American education. He was sensible of the part he might play in

the next scenes of his own country, and of the advantage which college training and the study of law in New England would be to his laudable ambition for public notice. He saw ahead correctly and far; he trusted his vision, and straightway put himself in the only common-sense path by which it could be realized. Yet such common sense in a youth is so rare as to seem like prescience.

His course at Harvard was marked by earnest study, and he was graduated in two years with high rank. There were then no law schools, so that the collegian who would be a barrister entered the office of some well-known practitioner as a student and hack for the period of three years. Adams took his novitiate in the office of Theophilus Parsons, who afterwards became the chief justice of Massachusetts, and after the usual time was admitted to the bar. He commenced practice in Boston, where in the course of years business came to him.

The grind of these plodding years was relieved by that interest in public questions which was natural element to an Adams. The waves of republican agitation had beaten back upon the Old World, throwing up those extreme doctrines which were then discussed on both sides of the ocean. Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" was the most widely read publication of the day. The younger Adams made answer in articles signed "Publicola" and printed in the *Boston Centinel*. These were noticed in England, where they were ascribed to John Adams. He next published, in the same journal, his views on American neutrality when the unbearable conduct of minister Genet was fomenting that question. This set of papers was followed by others which con-

tinued to affirm the intolerableness of the French threats.

Such an able defence of the course of the administration could not fail to fix the observant eye of Washington upon his Vice-President's son; and a foreign appointment for the young man, just twenty-seven, was the outcome. The Diary shows that he was already inwardly fretting because of inconspicuousness, a lot which he thought belonged only to indolent or stupid human beings; the appointment, therefore, as minister resident to The Hague, was hailed as an entrance into activities deservedly less obscure.

Mr. Adams spent three years at the capital of the Low Countries, although more than once impelled, by the French occupancy and the resulting difficulty in avoiding entangling relations for his government, to return; moreover, the peculiar state of affairs gave him little or nothing to do, so that he felt the impropriety of remaining. But President Washington, writing with imperative kindness, was unwilling to let him abandon the post at such a crisis; at the same time he predicted for him the highest diplomatic honors. He was sane enough to hearken to the President, keeping a cool head, shunning embroiling friends, observing and studying. His course is in high contrast to that of Monroe, who failed to meet Washington's mind in performing similarly delicate duties at Paris.

During this mission he went to London to transact business connected with the embassy there. It was there that he renewed acquaintance with the family of Joshua Johnson, the American consul at London, whom he had known at Nantes when there as a boy

with his father. He straightway became interested in the daughter, Louisa Catherine Johnson, who was a niece of Governor Johnson one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and he returned to London to marry her in the summer of 1797. This was a sympathetic marriage which sustained Mr. Adams throughout his long life.

He had previously been transferred by Washington to Portugal, but before he could make the change his father succeeded to the presidency. This occasioned a dilemma for New England consciences. The son could not look for presidential patronage from his father; the father could scarcely hope to give it without subjecting himself to the charge of nepotism, neither could he withdraw it without damaging the promising career of one who happened to be his son. In deciding the nice question the President was advised by Washington, who persuaded him that the country could ill afford to lose from its diplomatic corps so able a man as this son. Accordingly, John Quincy Adams remained abroad, his father changing the appointment from Portugal to the court of Prussia. In consequence, it was to the newly established mission at Berlin that he took his bride. Serious study and travel were incident to his stay there, the duties of the post being light. When President Adams closed with a bang his administration, he recalled his son, perhaps to relieve Mr. Jefferson of embarrassment, as has been alleged. This brought the younger Adams home, after a second residence of seven years in Europe.

Upon his return to America Mr. Adams resumed the practice of law in Boston. Within the next year a new door opened into public life. He was elected by his county to the Massachusetts senate, and he

had no hesitation about entering the humbler legislative service of the State. It quickly led, however, to the United States Senate, to which he was chosen by the Federal party of the Massachusetts legislature. Thus he was immediately thrust into a work for which he had not been specially trained and for which his adaptation was far from perfect; yet the legislative task was one to which his stern temper inclined, and it was in an arena where in his later life he was to acquire his chief honour by hard blows given and received.

Entering the Senate in 1803, he remained for five years in the difficult situation which his disposition and unmanageable independence, the hostilities of his party, and the dividing issues of those vexed years created. He also encountered at once that personal animosity transferred to himself from his bellicose father. He found himself shunned when he kept silent, and angrily opposed when he expressed himself. It was his unmerited fortune to be the most contemned member of the minority. In opposition to a combination which seemed to form naturally against him, he did not offer a complaisance of manner or of mental attitude; he opposed it stubbornly and uncompromisingly, showing the same intrepidity that subsequently carried him through the famous sixteen years' fight in Congress with which his life closed.

He voted sometimes with his party and sometimes against it, but always without concern to please it. He very soon made it plain that he did not share New England leniency towards the spoliations of the English. Of the two trespassers on American rights he thought England was the more outrageous, and that to weaken towards her was forever a losing game.

These sentiments did not suit the Federalists, who moreover were suspicious, remembering how the elder Adams had outwitted his party by renewing relations with England's enemy.

Thoroughly angry at the tameness which submitted to the impressment of American seamen, Mr. Adams first set himself against his party by supporting the Non-importation Act, which was opposed by all Federalists. Taking fire at the Chesapeake insult, he joined in a Democratic indignation meeting at Boston, which pledged "lives and fortunes" to any vigorous measures of the government consequent upon that overt outrage. This determined him as an apostate, though he had also attended later a like meeting of the reluctant Federalists, and he was straightway turned out of that communion of political saints.

Mr. Adams further joined himself to the administrative party by favoring the Embargo Bill. He never entertained for it the respect that Mr. Jefferson did, but he looked upon it as a protective expedient worth trying. Free from local distortion, he saw that the situation of his country demanded energetic measures, and he was sincere enough to declare that the embargo appeared to him more energetic than inaction. In accepting the policy of the administration, Mr. Adams gave no half-hearted allegiance. He said: "The President has recommended this measure on his high responsibility, I would not consider, I would not deliberate, I would act. Doubtless the President possesses such further information as will justify the measure." Later, he saw quite as surely its inefficiency for an offensive policy, and he was then as openly desirous of its repeal.

The support of this bill established his reputation among Eastern merchants as a renegade. He was covered with aspersions by his aristocratic neighbours and by his constituency. They united in the Massachusetts legislature to repudiate him by electing, months before his term of office had expired, his successor in the Senate. Immediately upon this insult he resigned his seat for the balance of the term.

So happened a most curious readjustment of family and party affiliations. An Adams and a Federalist passed into Jefferson's household of faith. How John and Abigail Adams accommodated themselves to their son's change is interesting to surmise. He received enough public criticism. His political change to the winning side exposed him at the time to the double charge of inconsistency and of disingenuousness. But the inconsistency was more apparent than real; for the Adamses were never disposed to side with England; and John Quincy Adams had merely grown to be more anti-British than his father; moreover, in certain other respects the Federalist party itself had changed face. The accusation of insincerity showed how utter was the inappreciation of the true fibre of the man, which prevailed then; and even time itself has not had an easy task in removing the strong prejudice of Eastern respectability against the name of one whose political honour is proven by evidences open to the student. Unveering Americanism directed his course then and always. He was never fenced by a political creed or by local considerations. Personal attachments were without question inconsiderable with him. But these characteristics gave wider range to his perception of truth and right, and left his actions unembarrassed. Cer-

tainly, private political ambition was apparently sacrificed in leaving his own party, for what could an Adams expect from Jefferson or Jeffersonians?

Adams now prepared his mind for the certainty of being restored to the situation of a private citizen. He repelled insinuating suggestions from members of the Republican party, and refused to consider election to the House of Representatives by the Republicans of his Congressional District. He made no effort to conciliate Jefferson. Retiring thus, he felt that his political prospects had declined, and apparently he was without expectation of seeing them revive through Republican preferment.

Then followed Mr. Madison's election and accession to the presidency. His mind was fixed upon establishing an American mission at the Russian court, and without hesitation he selected John Quincy Adams as the best representative. In time the Senate confirmed the appointment. John Adams, jealous for his son, saw in this mission political exile. But John Quincy accepted it in a spirit of loyalty to the new administration, and with simple aim to further the interests of his country in a remote but important European capital. Accordingly, he set out for St. Petersburg, and arrived there in the autumn of 1809, thus beginning his third long residence abroad.

His life there was unmarked. His duties were not burdensome. His relations with the liberal-minded Emperor, Alexander I. and with Count Romanzoff, the minister of foreign affairs, were exceptionally friendly throughout the five years. Foreign training had fitted him exactly for such a post. He had a fine dignity which led him to accept court kindness frankly yet with unobtrusive independence. It

could be seen of all men that he was a perfectly bred republican, and he enjoyed hearty respect. The Diary covers this period faithfully, presenting vividly Russia's part in the Napoleonic drama which was being hurried to an end on Slavic soil. It is a remarkable picture which those pages afford of a country, of a period, and of the life of a plain-living, high-thinking American minister at a lavish court.

The Russian friendship for the western Republic, which Mr. Adams had tactfully fostered, was evidenced by an offer of services in mediation to arrest the war with Great Britain. This good office was declined by England, but it really paved the way for direct settlement between the weary belligerents. Mr. Adams quitted Russia to go to Ghent. There, in August, 1814, he joined the American and English commissioners to begin that long and memorable sitting which resulted in the Treaty of Peace, signed four months later.

The narrative of this commission belongs to the history of the War of 1812, during the administration of President Madison; but Mr. Adams's personal relation to it cannot be entirely passed over. The keeper of the Diary was never more punctilious in his record than during this time. The drafting of numerous documents did not leave him too weary to note all the daily occurrences and to reflect his own mind concerning his associates. Individually the American commissioners were doubtlessly well chosen, but collectively they were ill-assorted, agreeing only in their variance from the positive gentlemen from London. Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay were wholly unsympathetic. They had neither habits nor standards in common. In local interests they were wide apart; the representative of New England

wished to protect American fisheries; these rights the Westerner called "the mere liberty of drying fish upon a desert," and thought they were of small consequence compared with the exclusive American ownership of the Mississippi River. In the committee-room the testiness of one was matched by the fractiousness of the other. "Mr. Clay is losing his temper," wrote Mr. Adams. We can hardly fancy that the latter had the grace to be conciliatory. The hard work which Mr. Adams gave unstintingly to the commission was not perfect in the eyes of his colleagues, and their riddling criticism he pathetically comments upon.

While hardly managing to get along with each other, all the steadiness and diplomacy of the five Americans were in demand to meet the irritating methods of the English agents. "The tone of all the British notes is arrogant, overbearing and offensive. The tone of ours is neither so bold nor so spirited as I think it should be," records Adams. The spirit of peace and compromise was at last evoked. The American commissioners had really conducted their side of the business very well. Their superior diplomacy had helped to avert the consequences of their countrymen's inferiority in arms, though there were stronger reasons why England did not any longer care to fight out the quarrel.

Mr. Adams spent the next few months in Paris, during which time Napoleon made his return from Elba, and many events of the "hundred days" occurred. From Paris he went to London, in May, 1815, where he met his official appointment to be minister to England. This was the position which John Adams had been the first to hold, and it was the highest in diplomatic service then as now. At

this court he encountered those unpleasant features in the American policy of Lords Canning and Castlereagh, but never the discourtesy which had tried the soul of his father in the days succeeding the Revolution. He lived on a meagre salary, not as comfortably as he had done in the friendly Russian capital. He stayed most of the time out of town. He writes: "One of the strongest reasons for my remaining out of town is to escape the frequency of invitations at late hours, which consume so much precious time, and with the perpetually mortifying consciousness of inability to return the civility in the same manner." He had not the fancy for "table-cloth oratory," as he named it, that has possessed many of his successors at the court of St. James.

After two years he was recalled to enter the cabinet of James Monroe, who had recently become President of the United States. Here ended his diplomatic service, which, during two residences abroad, numbered fifteen years in four European capitals. In length and honor it had fulfilled Washington's prophecy.

Mr. Adams became the Secretary of State under the new administration, and for the next eight years his ripe powers were directed to this important executive department. The chief questions which arose, and which were adjusted during this time, have been outlined in the life of President Monroe. They passed under the wise overseership of the President, but the state-craft of Adams is no less evident in an examination of those years. His courage, firmness and calculation made unquestionably a large part of Monroe's prosperous administration. Respect and harmony were always maintained between the President and his chief Secretary. Their inter-

ests were identical, for the success of the State department meant in general the success of the administration, and it also meant the probable succession of the Secretary to the presidency.

Mr. Adams's talent for unpopularity had full scope when he again entered public life in his own country. At Washington intrigue was rife among the Republicans, and since the Federalists were moribund, it took the place of party contention and was fully as malignant. The Secretary's position brought him rivals, and he knew how to make them enemies; but he had no friendly arts for creating a personal following. His proficiency and responsibility in dealing with his own domain did not secure to him a generous influence. This was always a well of complaint to his conscious and righteous pen; but with all due allowance for the meanness of other men, unpopularity and lack of friends can never be quite unmerited. Crawford in the cabinet and Clay in the House each recognized a competitor in the race eight years ahead, while his suspicions of them were readily excited. In such different environment his Diary ceases to be entertainingly descriptive and becomes entertainingly acid.

However democratic Mr. Adams's spirit, it is certain that his tastes were not suited to the social life of which he was expected to form an important part. Necessarily, it seemed a crude aggregation of pushing representatives from everywhere collected on a "miserable desert," as the town of Washington was then described. He had grown at home in old cities, with their protecting conventions and select circles. Moreover, he had no relish for the flavorsome sports which made life at the capital endurable for even a foreign minister. High stakes at cards, races, and

dueling were outside of his world, but unfortunately they regaled the dull society of that period. Swimming in the Potomac at daybreak was the only pastime in which the hard-worked Secretary indulged, and that was not exactly social diversion. Mr. and Mrs. Adams entertained regularly on Tuesday evenings, sometimes on a very large scale, as memorably on the occasion of a brilliant ball which they gave for the hero of New Orleans, to whom Mr. Adams was intent upon paying honor. Mr. Mills, a Representative from Massachusetts, describes Mrs. Adams, upon whom chiefly the care of hospitality devolved, as "a very pleasant and agreeable woman; but the Secretary [had] no talent to entertain a mixed company, either by conversation or manners."

The final settlement of boundaries and claims with Spain was a triumph to Mr. Adams. The years of negotiation, first with the courtly and cunning Don Onis and latterly with General Vivês, did not wear out his patience or his fighting spirit. He had calculated what was the most that could be got from Spain and the least that must be given up to her, and upon that basis he persistently worked until the business was concluded which he declared to be one of "two of the most memorable transactions of my life."

The other achievement to which he here refers, was less showy, but it embodied vast research; it was a treatise which he presented to Congress in the form of a report upon weights and measures.

If at first Mr. Adams was not sensitive to the issue of slavery forced by the Missouri debate, he soon clearly saw its importance and its trend. Then slavery began actively to repel him. He foresaw a death-struggle between the free and slave sides of the question, and that it would result in an attempt

to dissolve the Union. Compromise and dissolution appeared to him as alternatives; he did not regard the latter as an unthinkable state where such an enormous human principle was involved, and he did not imagine the forcible maintenance of the integrity of the Union. He recorded at this time words which burn with feeling and prophetic sense. "Slavery is the great and foul stain upon the North American Union, and it is a contemplation worthy of the most exalted soul whether its total abolition is or is not practicable." "Oh, if but one man could arise with a genius capable of communicating those eternal truths that belong to this question, to lay bare in all its nakedness that outrage upon the goodness of God, human slavery; now is the time and this is the occasion upon which such a man would perform the duties of an angel upon earth."

In foreign relations Mr. Adams was aggressive and stubborn. He declared an imperial unconcern for foreign opinion when he said in the cabinet, "If the world do not hold us for Romans they will take us for Jews, and of the two I would rather be charged with that which has greatness mingled in its composition." A spirited policy, upheld by unquailing temper and pride, certainly gained happy results at this particular period. When he had represented his government in Europe he neither truckled, nor boasted, nor presumed, and he could bear no affectation in those who came to deal with him on his own soil. The spicy interviews between him and Stratford Canning, of which an accurate report is furnished, are extremely amusing. The arrogance of the Englishman was squarely and instantly met by buffets from the Secretary. In the contest of words Mr. Adams appears daily to come off best, in spite

of "his more advanced years,"—to which Mr. Canning ascribed, with *double entente*, his own efforts to keep deferential. He did not fear to have the United States stretch out their tentacles over disputed territory. He maintained that they would take no slightest part in foreign affairs. He said to the Russian minister, Baron Zuyl, in relation to the northwest coast, "that we should assume distinctly the principle that the American continents are no longer subjects for any new European colonial establishments." This utterance Mr. Charles Francis Adams affirmed was the first hint of the Monroe Doctrine. It is evident enough that the State department did not hold the President back from his distinguished promulgation.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM THE PRESIDENCY TO CONGRESS.

Mr. Adams's succession to the presidency was not through the cordial popular expression which he coveted. He had not concealed his ambition for that chief seat, but beyond the admission he would make no sign. He had distinctly declared that he "should do absolutely nothing" to promote his election, and he adhered to a rigid aloofness from any connection which might seem to smack of intrigue. From this high ground he viewed the long pending election of 1824, and inevitably saw enough going on below to madden a saint.

There were many cliques in the Republican party, and their most striking vice, in the eyes of the Diarist, was that not one voluntarily centered on John Quincy Adams as a natural leader. He saw that his vote would be won with great difficulty, if at all, and only on the ground of the traditional claim which his position as chief Secretary gave him to the promotion. It is likely that he longed for a genuine personal following the more because of a temperament which denied its acquirement. He saw Crawford and Calhoun and Clay each bent upon entering the lists for himself, and such human selfishness caused him undue astonishment. Though we may not be able to sympathize with all that he felt, it is evident enough that his conscientious methods were not those of his competitors, and that therefore his very uprightness

created odds against him in the political field. Crawford was probably corrupter than his times, and he was as clever as any modern political jobber. Clay was master of many arts which were irritating to a rival not skilled in them, and to Adams he had appeared unprincipled in seeking, during the eight years past, to put the State department in an unpopular light. Calhoun astutely withdrew from the contest in season to keep friends and secure a large majority vote for Vice-President.

Another and the most powerful rival Mr. Adams did not for a long time recognize as such. He had always liked General Jackson. He had successfully defended him, at no small cost to himself, against the censure of Congress and the cabinet. This, he felt, with cause, deserved common gratitude. Besides, he did not think that the old battle-hero wanted presidential honors. Possibly when he became convinced to the contrary he still hoped by pronounced friendliness to capture the man of the masses for the second place on his own ticket.

The affair is an engrossing bit of history. For one thing, this battle between prominent candidates of the same party, whose personalities were the weapons instead of principles, resulted in independent nominations and thus killed "King Caucus." Crawford was indeed nominated by a caucus representing about a fourth of Congress, but he gained no strength through it. The other candidates were put forward by State legislatures and mass conventions. All were Republicans. Once more in the history of president-making no one was elected by the vote of the electors, and the choice of a president from the three first candidates passed into the House of Representatives to be made by the votes of the States. The

three men left eligible were Jackson, Adams and Crawford.

A great scandal was not wanting at this critical moment. A letter was published which accused the friends of Clay of having hinted that "they, like the Swiss, would fight for those who would pay best. Overtures were said to have been made by the friends of Adams to the friends of Clay, offering him the appointment of Secretary of State for his aid to elect Adams. And the friends of Clay gave this information to the friends of Jackson, and hinted that if the friends of Jackson would offer the same price, they would close with them." Mr. Clay at once denounced the calumniator, a weak representative who failed utterly to substantiate the disgraceful accusation. But denials and absence of all evidence did not affect the credence which this story continued to receive from Jackson partisans. General Jackson himself revived the slander for campaign purposes in the midst of the following election.

John Quincy Adams was the choice of thirteen States in the election of the House which occurred February 9, 1825. Mr. Clay had ignored the deterrent scandal, and cast his decisive influence for the man whom he considered fittest. Mr. Adams was then declared duly elected, and the controversy was closed. While this result chagrined the two other candidates, it did not gratify Mr. Adams. He said, sincerely no doubt, "Could my refusal to accept the trust thus delegated to me give an opportunity to the people to form and to express with a nearer approach to unanimity the object of their preference, I should not hesitate to decline the acceptance of this eminent charge and to submit the decision of this momentous question again to their decision." Thus without ela-

tion he went to his simple inauguration on March 4, 1825, assuming no less conscientiously the trust which fell to him.

As this eventful year closed he wrote in his Diary: "The year has been the most momentous of those that have passed over my head, inasmuch as it has witnessed my elevation, at the age of fifty-eight, to the chief magistracy of my country, to the summit of laudable, or at least blameless worldly ambition; not, however, in a manner satisfactory to pride or to just desire; not by the unequivocal suffrages of a majority of the people; with perhaps two-thirds of the whole people adverse to the actual result."

These unfavorable auspices did not influence him to make any effort to be popularly understood. Without the slightest hesitation he formed his cabinet with Henry Clay as Secretary of State. This selection was a daring proclamation of his superior, almost quixotic, attitude toward the libelous charges of a bargain. It was the sort of refutation in which a man of his mould would indulge, stoically indifferent as to the intelligent fairness of his critics. It is perfectly plain now that an Executive, who abstained with annoying punctilio from sensible changes in office and was suicidal to his own interests straight through every temptation to obligate a following, was one morally incapable of rewarding a corrupt man for corrupt service to himself. It seems as though this must always have been plain. But public judgment could be as fearfully warped then as at any time since, and lies were no less popular because they travelled only on horseback. Adam's course in offering the chief place in his cabinet to Clay was bold, and Clay's acceptance might be viewed as his challenge to defamers. But the wisdom of the

action of each is questionable. It would have been prudent, if not heroic, to have avoided, under the peculiar circumstances, the appearance of the alleged compact. If Mr. Adams did right to offer the office, Mr. Clay's acceptance was still injudicious. This he realized when he said in a speech many years later: "My error in accepting the office arose out of my underrating the power of detraction and the force of ignorance, and abiding with too sure a confidence in the conscious integrity and uprightness of my own motives."

The story of a "corrupt bargain" was revived now and again during the administration, never being allowed by Jacksonians to rest quite forgotten. John Randolph referred to the alliance between Adams and Clay as that of "Blifil and Black George —the Puritan and the blackleg." This scholarly invective gave to the furious Secretary a chance to challenge and fight. No blood was shed in this duel, the last of the "high-toned duels"; only the skirts of Randolph's flowing coat were burned. Before the campaign of 1828 General Jackson himself did not disdain to trump up the same charge of "bargain and corruption," when he publicly designated James Buchanan as the "member of Congress of high respectability" to whom Clay men had made overtures. Mr. Buchanan reluctantly came out to reply that General Jackson had wholly misunderstood their interview—he had never been thus approached. Again the lively question appeared to be laid.

The peculiar circumstances attending Adams's entrance into office have been thus dwelt upon because they bore so significantly upon the subsequent history of the chief actors. At this period the stage was crowded with stars who jostled the scenery and intro-

duced the drama of their own machinations. In such rivalry Adams was soon to be pushed to the wall.

From the hour of his inauguration enemies worked secretly, openly, and always cunningly, to decrease his influence. To this labour his great rival set with grim purpose. The handshake with which General Jackson had greeted him after the ceremonies of March 4, was apparently a pledge of redoubled opposition. This man had already gained the irresistible popularity of a military hero; now, as a defeated candidate, he kept and increased it. Moreover, treachery surrounded the President. He had set out to retain the Monroe incumbents of office, and in doing so he looked at no man as personal friend or foe. Making few removals, and those never for private reasons, he could not give any recognition to his supporters and consequently created no bounden following.

This attitude as to the civil service was extreme, but his conscience leaned still further away from self interest. He refused to create a natural protection for his administration. Office-holders known to be busily traitorous were retained without hesitation. It was well understood that to be active against the President would never lose a man his place. A marked case was that of Postmaster-general McLean, who secretly used the patronage of his office for General Jackson throughout the four years' term, while avowedly attached to the interests of his chief. Mr. Adams knew of the treachery but refused to make the removal which his indignant cabinet officers urged. His policy is fully set forth in this entry in his Diary: "I see yet no reason sufficient to justify a departure from the principle with which I entered

upon the administration, of removing no public officer for merely preferring another candidate for the presidency." Unquestionably he also lacked the faculty for organizing and had not the skill to use subordinates. Indeed, this was a family weakness.

This course might not have proved suicidal if it had been counteracted by winning methods. But Mr. Adams was as unconciliatory as he was uncompromising. Repellency was one of his vices. He had no gift for being righteous attractively. He was pretty sure to introduce into his best intentions something alienating. This provoked his well-wishers and was fatal to any hope of securing an increased adherence. He could not be supported enthusiastically, but only "from a cold sense of duty," as Ezekiel Webster expressed it. Mr. Mills sketched the President at the time of his inauguration, not sympathetically but as the most of people saw him. "This same President of ours is a man that I can never court or be on familiar terms with. There is a cold, repulsive atmosphere about him that is too chilling for my respiration, and I shall certainly keep at a distance from its influence. I wish him God-speed in his administration, and am heartily disposed to lend him my feeble aid whenever he may need it in a correct course, but he cannot expect me to become his warm and devoted partisan." Thus, indeed, the President stood, disdainful of small arts, with only a few friends and admirers, with many well-wishers and a host of enemies.

Disfavour towards the administration and new combinations against it were manifest when but a small majority in the Senate voted to confirm Mr. Clay as Secretary of State. The opposition Republicans now appropriated the name of Democrats, and

the administration party called themselves National Republicans. The first name has been kept, the latter was afterwards exchanged for Whigs. No political questions at home or abroad during these years were important enough to have aroused a spirit of just opposition. Other prominent members of the party had at various times advocated all that President Adams now set forth.

The occasion of the first real outbreak was the announcement of the Panama mission by the President in his first message to Congress. He then made known that he had accepted for the United States the invitation of the Spanish-American Republics to be represented at an Isthmian Congress, and that he should appoint ministers to go there. His opponents of every cast pounced upon this seemingly inoffensive plan. He himself makes note that this was the first evidence of concerted action between the Jackson, Crawford and Calhoun forces. The Senate and the House arraigned the project as rash and entangling. They also denied the right of the Executive to initiate allied relations with other powers.

These points were not sustained by numbers, for at the outset there was an administration majority. But the celebrated debate was long and acrimonious. That the commissioners appointed from the United States did not get to the first Congress, that the second one collapsed, and that the whole project of a Continental council now appears to have been altogether premature are later considerations which were not in the dispute. There was much popular sentiment for fraternization with the Continent where Bolivar had achieved liberty. Clay had voiced it for many years in Congress, where Webster now supported the mission. Theoretically, it seemed

wholly good to be represented at such a meeting. Southern antipathy to the scheme was solid because slaves had been freed in these new States, and because if Hayti joined the conference her commissioners would be blacks, free through insurrection.

Martin Van Buren, the wary tactician, was at this time leading over the forces of Crawford to Jackson's camp. Calhoun, Vice-President, had early decided that his own political chances demanded the same alliance. As president of the Senate he even tolerated Randolph's long speeches of "raving balderdash," because, as Adams divined, "Randolph's ribaldry was all pointed against the administration, especially against Mr. Clay and me."

Mr. Adams was throughout his term an advocate of extensive internal improvements; roads, canals, science and education were, to his mind, objects for national bounty. He had no hesitation in this espousal for, true to Federalist mould, he did not find the Constitution an obstruction to government undertakings. The sure prosperity of these times rendered broad improvements possible, as, on the other hand, a liberal policy stimulated enterprise. The completion of the Erie Canal was celebrated in the autumn after Adams took office, and he was present at the opening of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

It was on this latter occasion, which was a national one, that he inadvertently roused a burst of popular applause, probably his one experience of the kind. He was to break the soil, but his spade struck resistance and the ground did not yield. Becoming in earnest, he threw off his coat and soon succeeded in turning over a shovelful of earth. This homely act by its spontaneity stirred the crowd to shouts. If

Mr. Adams enjoyed the sympathetic experience it is certain that he immediately reminded himself of its cheapness. But the opposition continued to solidify, apparently without cause, for foreign relations were tranquil and the tariff of 1828 was not made an issue in time to affect affiliations. To be sure, the party line was again drawn between liberal and strict interpretation of the Constitution, yet this campaign was, to all intents and purposes, personal.

The President and his cabinet kept on most comfortable terms during the four years. This seems remarkable in the case of Clay. At Ghent he and Adams were so antagonistic, not alone in sectional interests but in temperament, that they found each other almost unbearable. The ascetic habits of Mr. Adams appeared, in his own estimate, to rebuke the very different ways of Mr. Clay. In the Diary is written at this time: "Just before rising I heard Mr. Clay's company retiring from his chamber. I had left him with Mr. Russell, Mr. Bentzon and Mr. Todd at cards. They parted as I was about to rise." It is scarcely presumable that as President Mr. Adams had grown less chilly towards diversion run into dissipation and gambling; but such a spirit of accommodation must have been mutually cultivated as gave each man a chance to come at the other's best side. Mr. Adams won the regard of his cabinet by his right purposes, and he was moreover a very considerate chief. Clay recorded: "I had fears of Mr. Adams's temper and disposition, but I must say that they have not been realized; and I have found in him, since I have been associated with him in the executive government, as little to censure or condemn as I could have expected in any man." Neither the cares of office nor the weight of years

caused the President to remit the harshness of his daily règime. Before breakfast he had walked four miles, made his fire, read the Bible with commentary, and despatched papers.

It was inevitable that this temperate administration should not be endorsed by reëlection, and the gloom of failure darkened the mind of Adams as retirement approached. If he did not see the reasons of failure, many men, less good, read them large. He had not avoided a prejudicial alliance after a bare election; he had been compassed by enemies who combined on a popular hero; he had not dismissed treacherous officials. While hurt by so many influences, nothing in the personality of the man himself had won warm friends or wide popularity.

His strength was in spite of these drawbacks; and it was even sufficient to secure him the nomination of the anti-Jacksonians at a convention held in January, 1828. General Jackson had been in the canvass since the legislature of his own State made his retaliatory nomination soon after Adams's inauguration, and the senseless cry, "Hurrah for Jackson!" had swelled with every year. Calhoun's name now strengthened the ticket.

The electioneering of 1828 was bitter with personalities. Stories, absurd enough on their face to have been cast out at once as false, were welcomed by the opposition and believed by the unthinking, through repetition. A pack of office-seekers who had got nothing from Adams, clamoured to oust him for some one who would recognize partisans and have spoils for them.

In the result Adams received fewer electoral votes than in 1824, the same number of States par-

ticipating. For some reason, Mr. Clay was not able to bring over to the administration a single vote. In a most ill-timed letter Mr. Adams had appealed to the electors of Virginia asking their vote on account of the services he had given the Union twenty years before in disclosing a New England plot to dismember the country. This revival brought him no present gain, but a goodly store of enmity in the chief quarter where he had to look for friends. To the settlement of the controversy aroused by that letter there was a long and posthumous history.

At the age of sixty-two John Quincy Adams went from the president's chair back to the family home at Quincy, as John Adams, at a slightly more advanced age, had done before him. The father lived to see a very darling wish gratified, the son exalted to the chief magistracy—but not to see him cast down. Von Holst summarizes the change thus: "In the person of Adams the last statesman who was to occupy it for a long time left the White House." And Goldwin Smith expresses the opinion that "As he was about the last President chosen for merit and not for availability, so he was about the last whose only rule was not party but the public service."

Retirement showed no open public opportunity to the despondent ex-President. He looked forward to some solace in literary work, but to the man who had lived events, memoirs and Latin classics were tame substitutes. Happily for the greater work which was yet to present itself to him, Mr. Adams went home to Massachusetts with powers still able and alert for undertakings.

The history of the last sixteen years of John Quincy Adams's life might embrace the political history of the country during that time. For from

December, 1831, to February, 1848, while five presidents administered the government, he sat in the House of Representatives, shrieking for right and voting on every question that came up. But here it is only essential to look at the broad relations of this portion of his career. They are happily so unmistakable and significant that the figure of "the old man eloquent" has a dramatic outline never lost in the business of legislation. It is not necessary to make a search to find him among Congressional personages and events. At this distance he rivets attention; he appears to dominate the scene and to make other men look small. Heroic and remote, at last he wins enthusiasm, for qualities not always admirable in a younger man took on impressiveness in the fearless old representative on the floor of successive Congresses, while his intrinsic character gained lustre with age.

The coming champion of the right of petition prepared to battle once more with almost fateful courage, not hopefully. The Diary has the entry: "My Life has been spent in stemming currents of popular opinion, and until lately with occasional and great success. But the runs of luck in life are as at whist. The tide in the affairs of men, when it has once begun to ebb, will go down. This free and bold expression of my opinion, which I disdain to withold, will hasten my downward course, and nothing can redeem it. Let me fulfil my destiny and, so far as may be possible, sustain my character." But though gloomy he was not to any degree weary or self-indulgent. Upon retirement he had begun to make assiduous use of time in renewed study of Cicero, the Scriptures, and astronomy, his favorite science, with gardening and forestry as diversions; and when asked

to turn back again into politics, his answer was simple: he had never sought, he would never decline public service. When Clay asked him how he felt to turn boy again and go into the House of Representatives, he also reminded him of the hard labour he was about to shoulder. "I well know this; but labour I shall not refuse so long as my hands, my eyes and my brain do not desert me," replied Mr. Adams.

He was elected to Congress from the Plymouth District by a very gratifying vote, and took his seat in December, 1831. He at once announced that his course would be independent of party and section. Such independence his acts had always suggested, but it never before had been allowed undisturbed to him by a confident constituency. The ex-President was free at last. Years later he explained to his faithful District his position and feelings when he entered the House. "I thought this independence of party was a duty imposed upon me by my peculiar position. . . . . I entered Congress without a sentiment of discrimination between the interests of the North and the South; and my first act, as a member of the House, was, on presenting fifteen petitions from Pennsylvania for the abolition of slavery within the District of Columbia, to declare, while moving their reference to the Committee of the District, that I was not prepared to support the measure myself, and that I should not. I was not then a sectional partisan, and I never have been."

The picture of this non-partisan fighter is full of contrasts—in appearance excited, with weak voice and weaker eyes; but in reality perfectly self-possessed, untiring in speaking and writing; not a pleasing speaker yet called eloquent, and always sure of

the attention of a full House because he had something to say marked by peculiar form or illustrations; independent, solitary, friendless, and hated, yet the most punctual member in Congress, the most faithful voter and industrious committee-man, the most learned and ready to serve with his stores of knowledge. While he was dreaded for his keenness, his sarcasm, his vituperativeness and a certain irritating coolness, the motives behind these manifestations were unquestioned, and there was accorded to him a respect which was mixed with reverence.

The Speaker of the House appointed Mr. Adams chairman of the committee on manufactures. This was an important position, since the tariff of 1828 was up for revision. The South was dissatisfied with what it called "a tariff of abominations," while Northern interests enjoyed its protection. Mr. Adams was urged to take the place that his breadth of view and the authority of his name might reconcile both sides to a middle ground which he could sanction, and so possibly save the Union. This he did reluctantly, since the subject of manufactures in its details was not familiar to him. In this position he demonstrated his fair disposition towards the different sections of the country. In a fit of grace, Southern politicians handsomely acknowledged that he had "not only fulfilled all his duties with eminent ability in the committee, but in a spirit and temper that demanded grateful acknowledgments and excited the highest admiration." In this capacity he was in no way provoking to nullification in South Carolina, neither was the tariff obnoxious to that State a measure of his administration, although passed during his last years as President.

Yet when the national revenue laws were nullified

by the ordinance of South Carolina, he set himself against any measure by which a State could defeat the laws of the Union. He declared against modifying a tariff before the threat of nullification. That, he considered, was a distinct issue to be fought out then and there. He was at variance with President Jackson, whose whole policy in this affair he censured at length in a minority report from the Committee on Manufactures. The President's angry declarations against the offending State were popular and effective at the time; yet they had the explosiveness of an exasperated parent, angry, not at the fault but at the show of resistance,—ready to punish and then to pass over. He would have maintained executive authority at the cost of fighting, but he was too much in sympathy with Southern spirit not to be willing to recede and not to be satisfied with Clay's ready compromise. Adams, on the other hand, would have persisted in a course which recognized no concession to nullification or secession.

In fact, Mr. Adams found himself generally opposed to Jackson's administration, and what he felt he strenuously expressed. He objected in powerful arguments to Jackson's animosity to manufactures and his abandonment of a system of protection; to his reduction of revenue, paralyzing to defence and to improvements; and to the gift of public lands, which favoured exclusively cultivators of the soil. Against these extreme principles of democracy he argued that simplicity was not the aim of good government but was often "an abdication of the power to do good; a divestment of all power in this confederate people to improve their own condition."

He objected quite as strongly to the President's over-use of personal power, and he furiously exposed

in Congress such usurpations, as he termed them. These included about every act of Andrew Jackson. In his personal antipathy he openly opposed a Harvard degree for the President. Yet in spite of his burning opposition, personal and political, he gallantly supported the President in his trenchant demand for satisfaction of the French debt, and gained for it the support of the House.

As has been quoted from his own record, Mr. Adams's first act in Congress was the presentation of a bundle of petitions praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. The abolitionists were appearing throughout the North and West in various degrees of rankness. For a long time their principal measure was this one of presenting petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and in the Territories. Mr. Adams stepped out as their champion in the House solely on the right of petition. He says he did not favour the legislation proposed, but simply insisted on the right of any petition under the sun to be heard. He seemed to feel laid upon him one initial burden in the contest for abolition—to keep the way open, to see that the cause was not stifled in legislature. It is difficult to fancy how absolutely alone he stood among hot Southerners and indifferent Northern men. His distant District was always loyal, and all of the radical portion of New England gave him the support of sentiment, but in his own respectable city of Boston his course was most annoying to solid citizens. His admirers at large, however, swelled gradually to a great scattered constituency, as the embryo party for abolition grew.

The host of petitions which this unwearied presenter saw tabled is bewildering, though their prayer

was invariably the same, with later the addition asking that Texas should not be annexed. The abolitionists had discovered a channel which was the path of least resistance. Almost every month new groups of reformers resolved to bear witness to Congress, since there was one Congressman sworn that their entreaties should be heard. During 1835 and 1836, amid angry jeers, the ex-President presented them one after another, proposing their reference to some committee which should make a report. But though they were received after violent discussions, in which Mr. Adams was dauntless and provoking, commitment was refused; and early in 1837 a resolution was passed by the House of Representatives which aimed to shut off anti-slavery expression. It was "that all petitions relating to slavery, without being printed or referred, shall be laid on the table, and no action shall be had thereon." This was the "gag" rule,—the formal obstacle which Mr. Adams had to beat against for nearly all his remaining years.

The famous incident of the alleged petition from the slaves themselves, occurring a few days later, aside from its drollery, gives an admirable picture of Mr. Adams in his offensive and defensive attitude towards the Congressional body. It was a triumph of those tactics which force opponents to put themselves emphatically in the wrong. One day, after presenting a string of petitions, he stated casually that he held in his hand another upon which he wished to have the decision of the Speaker; it purported to come from slaves. This was the red signal for riot, and for four days the slave-holding gentlemen raged about Mr. Adams. At last they proposed resolutions that the Honorable John Quincy Adams, for presenting a petition from slaves for the abolition of slavery,

be brought instantly to the bar to receive the severe censure of the Speaker. But having touched off the fury of the slave-holders, the veteran had been waiting collectedly for the hour of their absurd discomfiture to come. When he arose to speak on this resolution of censure, he made an elaborate defence, in which he mingled irony and fervor. But the sensation was reached when he reminded them of two facts which they had overlooked in the excitement; one, that he had only asked the Speaker's opinion concerning a certain petition, and the other, that the contents of that petition were as yet unknown to the House; in fact, the petition claiming to come from slaves prayed the reverse of the abolition of slavery, and also asked for the suppression of that agitator, J. Q. Adams. That it was a hoax, or forgery, as Mr. Adams chose to call it, he was not ignorant, but he was guarded from the charge of flippancy by his preliminary statement, made when first presenting the bundle of petitions, that he suspected that they were not all genuine. It has been said that Mr. Adams was deficient in the sense of humour; however true this may be, it is certain no such other Olympain joke was ever prepared for a house of Congress.

But, though apparently eager for any fray of tactical athletics, no man was ever more truly concerned for a cause than was Mr. Adams for that which he was befriending. He was cautious as well as bold; he was everything in order to keep a personal ascendancy which might win at last. He wrote anxiously: "The most insignificant error of conduct would be my irredeemable ruin in this world; and both the ruling political parties are watching with intense anxiety for

some overt act by me to set the whole pack of their hireling presses upon me."

Another marked episode in these closing years occurred when the Twenty-sixth Congress assembled in December, 1839. A more impressive scene is not to be found in the history of the Congresses. When in the roll-call the clerk of the House of Representatives came to New Jersey, he passed over the names of the five members for that State because, as he declared, these seats were contested. This summary exclusion by the clerk of accredited members from voting at the organization of the House, threw that body into confused debate for three days, and no organization could be affected. The dramatic solution of the problem was described by one of the newspapers of the day as follows:

"Mr. Adams, from the opening of this scene of confusion and anarchy, had maintained a profound silence. He appeared to be engaged most of the time in writing. To a common observer he seemed to be reckless of everything around him. But nothing, not the slightest incident, escaped him.

"The fourth day of the struggle had now commenced. Mr. Hugh A. Garland, the clerk, was directed to call the roll again. He commenced with Maine, as usual in those days, and was proceeding towards Massachusetts. I turned and saw that Mr. Adams was ready to get the floor at the earliest moment possible. His eye was riveted on the clerk, his hands clasped the front edge of his desk, where he always placed them to assist him in rising. He looked, in the language of Otway, like a 'fowler eager for his prey.'

" 'New Jersey!' ejaculated Mr. Hugh Garland, 'and—'

"Mr. Adams immediately sprang to the floor.

" 'I rise to interrupt the clerk,' was his first exclamation.

" 'Silence! Silence!' resounded through the hall. 'Hear him! Hear him! Hear what he has to say! Hear John Quincy Adams!' was vociferated on all sides.

"In an instant the most profound stillness reigned throughout the hall,—you might have heard a leaf of paper fall in any part of it,—and every eye was riveted on the venerable Nestor of Massachusetts—the purest of statesmen and the noblest of men! He paused for a moment, and having given Mr. Garland a withering look, he proceeded to address the multitude.

" 'It was not my intention,' said he, 'to take any part in these extraordinary proceedings. I had hoped this House would succeed in organising itself; that a speaker and clerk would be elected, and that the ordinary business of legislation would be progressed in. This is not the time or place to discuss the merits of conflicting claimants from New Jersey. That subject belongs to the House of Representatives, which, by the Constitution, is made the ultimate arbiter of the qualifications of its members. But what a spectacle we here present! We degrade and disgrace our constituents and the country. We do not and cannot organize; and why? Because the clerk of this House—the mere clerk, whom we create, whom we employ, and whose existence depends upon our will—usurps the *throne*, and sets us, the vice-regents of the whole American people, at defiance, and holds us in contempt! And what is this clerk of yours? Is he to suspend, by his mere negative, the functions of government and put an end to this

Congress? He refuses to call the roll! It is in your power to compel him to call it, if he will not do it voluntarily.' Here he was interrupted by a member, who said that he was authorised to say that compulsion could not reach the clerk, who had avowed that he would resign rather than call the State of New Jersey. 'Well, sir, let him resign,' continued Mr. Adams, 'and we may possibly discover some way by which we can get along without the aid of his all-powerful talent, learning, and genius!

"'If we cannot reorganize in any other way,—if this clerk of yours will not consent to our discharging the trust confided to us by our constituents,—then let us imitate the example of the Virginia House of Burgesses, which, when the colonial Governor Dinwiddie ordered it to disperse, refused to obey the imperious and insulting mandate, and, like men—'

"The multitude could not contain or repress their enthusiasm any longer, but saluted the eloquent and indignant speaker, and interrupted him with loud and deafening cheers, which seemed to shake the Capitol to its centre. The very genii of applause and enthusiasm seemed to float in the atmosphere of the hall, and every heart expanded with an indescribable feeling of pride and exultation. The turmoil, the darkness, the very 'chaos of anarchy,' which had for three successive days pervaded the American Congress, was dispelled by the magic, the talismanic eloquence, of a single man; and once more the wheels of government and legislation were put in motion.

"Having, by this powerful appeal, brought the yet unorganized assembly to a perception of its hazardous position, he submitted a motion requiring the acting clerk to call the roll. Accordingly Mr. Adams was interrupted by a burst of voices demanding,

'How shall the question be put?' 'Who will put the question?' The voice of Mr. Adams was heard above the tumult: 'I intend to put the question myself!' That word brought order out of chaos. There was the master mind.

"As soon as the multitude had recovered itself, and the excitement of irrepressible enthusiasm had abated, Mr. Richard Barwell Rhett, of South Carolina, leaped upon one of the desks, waved his hand and exclaimed: 'I move that the Honorable John Quincy Adams take the chair of the Speaker of the House, and officiate as presiding officer till the House be organized by the election of its constitutional officers. As many as are agreed to this will say Ay; those—'

"He had not an opportunity to complete the sentence, 'those who are not agreed will say No;' for one universal, deafening, thundering AY responded to the nomination.

"Hereupon it was moved and ordered that Lewis Williams, of North Carolina, and Richard Barnwell Rhett, conduct John Quincy Adams to the chair.

"Well did Mr. Wise, of Virginia, say: 'Sir, I regard it as the proudest hour of your life; and if, when you shall be gathered to your fathers, I were asked to select the words which, in my judgment, are best calculated at once to give the character of the man, I would inscribe upon your tomb this sentence: *I will put the question myself!*' "

Mr. Adams acted as chairman for eleven days, and then, this brilliant work finished and the trouble over, he became again absorbed in his own unique campaign of duty. How could such a disturber remain popular for a space of time longer than eleven days?

He had no leisure to be an idol. After he had been again at the attack by presenting a petition of citizens of Haverhill, Massachusetts, praying that Congress would immediately take measures peaceably to dissolve the Union of the States, and after another explosion of wrath about his head, he recorded: "My occupations during the month have been confined entirely to the business of the House, and for the last ten days to the defence of myself against an extensive combination and conspiracy in and out of Congress, to crush the liberties of the free people of this Union, by disgracing me with the brand of censure, and displacing me from the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I am in the midst of the fiery ordeal, and day and night absorbed in the struggle against this attempt at my ruin. God send me a good deliverance."

Before death took him Mr. Adams had the extreme gratification of knowing that he had won the initial victory of anti-slavery: in December, 1844—the "gag" rule was rescinded.

In 1846, while walking in the street in Boston, paralysis attacked him. But he recovered from the first shock so that in three months he was again in Washington. When he entered the Hall of Representatives, the members arose as one man to pay him reverence. His accustomed seat was surrendered to him, and he was ceremoniously conducted to it by two members. His expression of thanks was touchingly simple: "Had I a more powerful voice I might respond to the congratulations of my friends, and the members of this House, for the honour which has been done me. But enfeebled as I am by disease, I beg you will excuse me."

The dismembering War with Mexico was wholly

unrighteous to Mr. Adams, for he saw the slave influence to be its sole cause; and he fought it as a piratical invasion with tremendous energy. At its beginning he said: "The banners of freedom will be the banners of Mexico, and your banners—I blush to speak the word—will be the banners of slavery." In the same speech he announced his startling belief that "the war powers of Congress extend to interference with the institution of slavery in every way by which it can be interfered with, from a claim of indemnity for slaves taken or destroyed, to the cession of the States burdened with slavery to a foreign Power." Thus he became the first authority for the ground assumed in the emancipation proclamation.

For one year longer he kept his place, speaking to the House once only. On February 21, 1848, he answered to his name firmly and for the last time. Soon after, as he seemed about to rise, and the Speaker's attention had been attracted to him by the call "Mr. Adams," he fell forward stricken again by paralysis. He lay insensible for two days in the Speaker's room in the Capitol. Before the spirit left, the lips framed its fitting adieu, "This is the last of earth; I am content." No honor was withheld from the dead hero. Instead of censure there was universal tribute. Escorted in dignity from the Capitol to the Congressional cemetery, to Boston, to Faneuil Hall, and then to Quincy, his remains finally reposed in his quiet birthplace, beside his parents. Over his tomb are the words on which he rested his case—"Alteri sæculo."

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON.

(TWO ADMINISTRATIONS, 1829-1837.)

CHAPTER XIII.

A NATIONAL HERO.

THE first six presidents of the Republic had each been among its creators. The seventh president, Andrew Jackson, did not conform to the stately and conservative type of his predecessors; his was a rude individuality, of the kind which the raw conditions of pioneer life tended to produce. His parents were not of the old stock of the country. They belonged to that distinctive migration of Scotch-Irish which has been no small factor in the evolution of the American people. In the old country his father had been a humble tiller of hired land, and his mother a linen weaver. They came over in 1765 and went directly to the Waxham settlement, North Carolina, whither connections and neighbors had previously gone. There, two years later, the father died, and Andrew was born shortly afterwards, March 15, 1767.

How the lad was raised in a poor settlement where his father had not had time to acquire land is left to conjecture; he must have been dependent upon his relatives, and his advantages could not have been

other than crude. The first authentic incident of his life is the famous one which connects him with the Revolutionary War in the Carolinas. During a British raid he and his brother were taken prisoners. Each was ordered to clean an officer's muddy jack-boots; each in turn refused and was wounded by angry blows from the officer's sword. Andrew, with hot spirit, told his epauletted captor that boot-cleaning was not the duty of a prisoner of war. The boys were then marched to a distant British depot, where they suffered disease and hardship. While they were still sick with fever in the prison the boys' mother effected their deliverance, and, supporting them on horseback, got them both home, where Andrew's brother died. The stout-hearted mother, who had now lost two sons through the war, then started for the British prison at Charleston, South Carolina, to care for the sons of other mothers who were there ill. While in this service she too died, and the boy Andrew, who had known little but distress thus far, was left at fourteen to make his fight alone.

When the War of Independence was over young Jackson frittered away a little time in uncertain movements, but soon settled down, with what scraps of education he had been able to pick up, to study law. The law was then the most open road for ambitious youths, though Jackson was not destined to be one of the few who found eminence therein.

Nevertheless, he was a licensed practitioner when twenty years old, ready for an opening. This came when his friend, John McNairy, was appointed Judge of the Superior Court of the Western District of North Carolina,—that frontier beyond the Cumberland mountains which was later to become Tennes-

see; and he also got the office of public prosecutor for the same district. This meant his emigration through an Indian wilderness to the stockade settlement of Nashville. The settlers who pushed beyond these mountain barriers were to belong thenceforth to a still newer world whose natural egress was by the great rivers to the port of New Orleans.

In Nashville Jackson had the unpopular duty of enforcing legal order and of prosecuting the large debtor class in behalf of creditors. He held the office for several years, punishing offenders relentlessly. He also began to be a landowner.

About this time occurred Jackson's marriage, which was most fortunate in its thirty years of happiness, but most unfortunate in its clumsy irregularity. The truth and devotion of Jackson and his wife to one another are warrant for the seriousness and honorableness of their first union; but the bare facts of the marriage were such as awake scandal in this world, and the scandal of the little Western village pursued the couple forever, with increasing meanness as Jackson grew in distinction.

The young man was twenty-four, having been three years in the new country, when he became united to Mrs. Robards, a woman whose previous short married life had been unhappy. Robards, the former husband, had applied to the legislature of Virginia for an act of divorce, and that legislature had authorised the supreme court of Kentucky to try the case. Inconsiderately assuming that this preliminary action meant absolute divorce, Jackson and Mrs. Robards were married. More than two years later, upon learning that Robards had but just obtained his divorce decree in the Kentucky court, they were married again.

The charge of irregularity in this early step, repeatedly made, always infuriated the General. Blamably hasty as he had been, he never admitted his error, and was ready to defend his wife's honour at the point of the pistol. They were a couple united by rare devotion, and that ought to cover the case. Jackson's highest honours did not swerve him from absolute allegiance to the wife who had trusted him in youth. She was a woman of homely virtues, but she was enduringly charming to him.

The western counties were subsequently ceded by North Carolina to the Federal government, and in 1796 the Territory organised as the State of Tennessee. Jackson helped to make its constitution, and he was elected by the people to be its first representative in Congress. He went to Philadelphia just as Washington's second administration was closing, and the raw young man of thirty voted against the address to the retiring first President. During the next year Jackson was appointed United States senator, to fill a vacancy. He soon resigned, seemingly irked by the eminent men around him, and preferring the deference and the liberty he enjoyed at home.

Jefferson, in later years, thus recalled him: "When I was President of the Senate he was senator, and he could never speak on account of the rashness of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly, and as often choke with rage." Gallatin described him as "a tall, lank, uncouth-looking personage, with long locks of hair hanging over his face, and a queue down his back tied in an eel-skin; his dress singular, his manners and deportment those of a rough backwoodsman."

Office was seeking the rough backwoodsman; upon his return to Tennessee he was made judge of the

supreme court of his State. In 1801 he was elected major-general of the militia by the field officers, although his previous service had been only that of a private in an Indian fight in 1789. This election, due to the deciding vote of the governor, pointed his career.

In 1804 he was apparently through with law and politics. He had resigned his judgeship, and gave his energies to his plantation and to trade.

Jackson early began to be celebrated for his quarrels, which, however, did not decrease his popularity. The story of these feuds and of his duels is entertaining, but serves to show only that unchecked quarrelsomeness which spoiled some of his nobler traits and made real statesmanship impossible for him. He had a long and hot dispute with Sevier, his governor, battled with his old friend, Judge McNairy, fought one duel with a companion lawyer, and in another killed Charles Dickinson. In the South and West these were the athletics of that period succeeding the Revolution, and the fashion exactly suited the disposition of Jackson. He helped to propagate a code of honour which kept a tenacious hold of the Southern gentleman for fifty years.

It is not easy to get a clear idea of Jackson's relations with Burr. The acquaintance was old, and never ceased to have a friendly aspect. Burr's hazy plans for an expedition down the Mississippi received the business aid of Jackson in contracting for boats, and the visits of the recently retired Vice-President were social events at Nashville. When, very late, Jackson became convinced of the serious intent of Burr's preparations, he promptly dropped all action in his behalf, and, as commander of the militia, hastened to obey the President's proclamation order-

ing the arrest of the intriguer. Yet at the time of Burr's trial he appeared in Richmond to defend him and to denounce Jefferson. It is quite possible to believe that Jackson was wholly loyal to national interests, and yet inclined to be the partisan of one whom he had liked and aided. Dispassionate friendships were as alien for him as were mild antipathies.

This unremarkable portion of Jackson's life closed at forty-five, with the opening of the War of 1812. His barbaric vigour came then to its opportunity. The man was without Napoleon's ambition for definite ends of aggrandisement, but he had Napoleon's impulse to project his personality upon his country in some wholesale manner, and the new war was his chance.

When the news of the declaration of war reached Nashville General Jackson instantly tendered his services at the head of 2,500 volunteers from his own militia. Such promptness indicated a zeal which both President Madison and his Secretary of War appreciated. The services of "an unknown man in the West" were accepted at once, though he received no particular commission until late that year. Then, when New Orleans was to be reënforced, Governor Blount of Tennessee ordered him to prepare to descend the river with his men. As soon as the army was in readiness Jackson wrote to the Secretary of War. "I have the pleasure to inform you that I am now at the head of 2,070 volunteers, the choicest of our citizens, who go at the call of their country to execute the will of the government, who have no constitutional scruples, and, if the government orders, will rejoice at the opportunity of placing the American eagle on the ramparts of Mobile, Pensacola and Fort St. Augustine, effectually banishing from the

Southern coasts all British influence." This announcement contained the general's future military creed and presaged his reckless ardor.

After a thousand miles of river travel and a month of impatient waiting at Natchez for further orders, an express from Washington arrived at camp. This brought an extraordinary message to Jackson—the corps under his command was then and there dismissed from service with thanks; without pay, rations or transport. Jackson was, with good reason, furious. A little later this outrageous order was corrected, and the government provided pay and rations. But without waiting for this, Jackson had decided to march his long-enduring troops back to their homes before disbanding them, and to supply transportation on his own responsibility; and for a month he led them through the wilderness by the shortest route till the public square of Nashville was reached. The fact that through the effort of Thomas H. Benton he was afterwards reimbursed by the War department nowise lessened the grateful idolatry of his soldiers.

Immediately following this service of Benton's came Jackson's affray with him and his brother,—a brawling battle in which Jackson pursued Benton with a pistol and Benton's brother put a bullet into Jackson's arm which remained there for twenty years.

Though not needed at New Orleans, and unsummoned to invade Canada, the wounded man soon had an imperative call to fight for his neighbors. The uneasy Creeks, stirred up by Tecumseh's mission, were risen in Alabama and had massacred the refugees crowded in Fort Nims. Alabama was almost depopulated of whites after this awful slaughter. Georgia and Tennessee were hot for revenge. A

local war was speedily developed, which affected the whole campaign and brought Jackson to the front.

As soon as able after his last duel he took the field again with his Tennessee militia. He speedily quarrelled with the other major-general. He was, moreover, contending against his own ill-health, against insubordination, and against insufficiency of provisions. He handled his uneasy soldiers with severity, yet by masterly tact he held their personal devotion. His military movements were rapid and crushing. The Creek campaign in Alabama lasted but seven months, and he had but one important battle with the Indians —that which wiped out the gathering of Creeks at Horse Shoe Bend. But his operations were conducted with such energy and thoroughness that the spirit of the hostiles was broken, and those who did not surrender fled to Florida. The territory was thus cleared for future military operations against the British—an incalculable gain, as it was then considered.

This summary campaign had the immediate effect of vastly increasing Jackson's popularity and calling attention to his generalship. When the Tennessee militia went home this time it was with glory, and their leader received not only the acclamations of his State but a major-generalcy in the regular army from the President.

Being appointed to command the department of the South, he proceeded directly to Mobile, Alabama, the defence of which against the British was now possible, as the Indians were no longer in its rear. From there he watched the British dispose themselves on Spanish territory at Pensacola, Florida. He did not regard Spain's intentions as a neutral Power a point to be studied too nicely. The policy at Wash-

ington was confusing, and no instructions came to Jackson. While he was waiting for reinforcements, the British appeared off Mobile Point and attacked the old fortification, Fort Bowyer. The small garrison which Jackson had hastily placed there made a determined defence, and the enemy retired. At last reënforced, he decided to "rout the English out of Pensacola," although the government had not ordered the step. After a swift march he successfully stormed the town. The Spanish forts were surrendered, and the English blew up Fort Baranca at the mouth of the harbour, and sailed away from Spanish quarters.

Without the loss of a man, Jackson hurried back to resume the defence of Mobile. When the safety of that harbour was assured, his next care was for New Orleans. There was likely to be the new point of attack, and thither he went in December, 1814.

The defence of New Orleans, which culminated in the remarkable victory of January 8, 1815, was the redeeming achievement of the war, and though the battle was fought two weeks after peace had been made at Ghent, it had a prodigious effect upon the spirit and pride of the American people. It surprised and delighted them, and by a burst of popular enthusiasm Jackson became a national hero. The energy which prepared this defenceless city of waterways against a floating enemy, and which drove them off by sea and land, was a one-man power, if such a case can be.

Jackson put the city under martial law; he daily strengthened the works by every means, and he did not allow the invader to make the first attack. Nevertheless, the final repulse and slaughter of such a great force of veteran English soldiery, while the

American position remained unaffected and the pioneer troops were almost unhurt, are not fully accounted for; the curious chances of war must be admitted. In the happy reaction which peace and such a triumph brought, the administration did not withhold any credit from Jackson. It honoured itself in honouring the man who had glory to reflect.

After the victory Jackson established discipline over his heterogeneous forces by a severity new to the American army. He thought that was his first duty, and extenuating circumstances were not deterrent. He likewise dealt with the inhabitants of New Orleans according to unrelaxed martial law, even when he knew unofficially of the peace. Military power coupled with success cultivated in him an absolutism which knocked against civil authority, and he did not know how to recede gracefully from an ultra position. He disobeyed a writ of *habeas corpus*, took the writ from the court and imprisoned the judge. For these acts he refused to show cause and was fined $1,000. Congress paid back to him this sum, with interest, in 1842.

In the spring the major-general went home to Nashville for rest. He had been in the field for more than a year and a half. After a few months at the Hermitage he was again off on a journey; this time, upon invitation, to Washington. He was to keep charge of the Southern division of the army in time of peace, and he now went up to give and receive advice. Arriving there, he at once took the capital by storm. His courtly appearance and suavity ("presidential manners," Webster called them) enhanced his reputation, captured the drawing-rooms. The ladies were for him. He was then forty-eight years old, but to

the nation he was a newly-found, and therefore youthful, hero.

The interval between peace after New Orleans and the invasion of Florida gave General Jackson time for another personal altercation; this one also led to a challenge to a duel. He held General Scott answerable for having privately criticised as mutinous his own order forbidding his subordinates to obey any commands from the War department which had not come through him. The large liberty which he gave himself, both in the assumption of authority and in bold speech, he never extended to one in any way amenable to him. This was a shortcoming which he probably never realised as his own, for he was too active and too violent to be self-conscious or introspective. In this particular case Scott declined to be insulted into a fight, and the only recourse of both parties was to publish their correspondence.

And now came on that trouble with the Indians called the Seminole War; a campaign undoubtedly necessary as a public measure, but which might have been kept a small affair save for the hasty military spirit of its actors.

The first collision was at Fowltown, a village of the refugee Creeks almost in the Florida line. Two Indians and a squaw were killed. This the Indians avenged by a tenfold slaughter, from ambush, of United States troops, their wives and children, as these were ascending the Appalachicola. By those two acts the war was well started. At this critical juncture Jackson was ordered to Georgia to take command. He quickly raised his Tennesseans and made his way through Georgia. He went with the idea of conquering Florida for the United States, and

he afterwards always claimed to have understood that the will of the administration fitted his wish. This sweeping purpose pushed his advance into a pursuit of Indians into whatever territory found. He censured Spain's inability to deal with the savage foe, and England's bad influence upon them; and he proposed to deal decisively with both of these paralysing conditions. Hence his instant capture of the Spanish fort of St. Mark's, whither the Indians and the desperado negroes had fled as he marched through the country. There Arbuthnot, a Scotch Indian trader, got in his way; and there Armbrister, an Englishman and clearly an adventurer, was brought in also a prisoner. The former was friendly to the Indians, but he was no spy or inciter to outbreaks. After a court-martial both men were hanged on the day that Jackson left St. Mark's and set out for home. Previously he had put to death two Indian chiefs captured by stratagem. These were acts not to be forgiven except in a national idol.

This war was active during only the first five months of 1818, yet it was unmistakably quelling. As the Creek power had gone, so went that of this other remnant, the Seminoles. And in passing Florida had been conquered. This was an achievement for which the government at Washington was scarcely prepared. The administration had been seeking the acquisition of the territory through diplomatic channels, but to lay violent hands upon it was far from the President's anxious plan. The State department had, in consequence of the invasion, not only complications with Spain to settle, but England to placate for the execution of her citizens. Since General Jackson's acts were approved by ninety-nine in a hundred of the people his popularity did not

allow his being censured. To justify the unjustifiable was the other horn of the dilemma. Luckily, Spain had a price for Florida, and in spite of provocation the English ministry did not hold up the finger which might have produced war.

John Quincy Adams, the Secretary of State, persuaded the President and the disapproving members of the cabinet to commend Jackson's course publicly, and to take the responsibility for it; while he had the task of making good these assumptions with the aggrieved powers. Calhoun, who had been in favour of repudiating the invasion and of making amends, accordingly, as Secretary of War, wrote to Jackson wholly in a congratulatory strain. This cabinet arrangement was disclosed after ten years of secrecy, but in ample time to affect Jackson's attitude towards Calhoun, and thereby to wreck the latter's presidential prospects.

Instead of being censured, Jackson, now a privileged person, had to be made reconciled to the restoration of St. Mark's and Pensacola to Spain,—a piece of justice which the administration had agreed upon.

Jackson was in Washington during the winter of 1818-'19, looking out for friends and foes. Congress was taken up with the investigation of his late campaign. A vote of censure was finally defeated in the House, and not acted upon in the Senate. He at this period reckoned Adams and Calhoun as his friends. Since Clay's loud opposition to the administration now included Jackson's last operations, these two men began to be personally opposed. The general had long counted Crawford an enemy. When, in the next year, Florida was bought, Mr. Adams consulted Jackson about the western bound-

ary of the Louisiana purchase, which had then to be settled. Jackson afterwards denied that he had been satisfied with the line of the Sabine.

Soon after the ratification of the treaty, in 1821, Jackson was appointed governor of the newly acquired territory. But his military career was ended, for through reduction of the army by the government, he was retired. He took leave of his troops in general orders, which he made more or less offensive to Major-general Brown, his senior. Over Florida he had almost dictatorial powers. In the delay of cession he came into collision with the retiring Spanish governor Callava. During a wrangle over some sets of papers which the new governor demanded in the name of poor claimants, Callava was sent to the calaboose while the papers were taken from his house. Whereupon Fromentin, a judge of that district, issued a writ of *habeas corpus* for Callava; Jackson summoned Fromentin to show cause for the interference, and in the end both appealed to Washington. Jackson's orders started a similar trouble in East Florida. After six months of friction he resigned, out of sorts in body and spirit, and went to his home.

Clear proof had been afforded that he was not the man to be given indefinite civil power. He was too impatient, too arrogant, and too partisan. When offered the mission to Mexico he declined it. A letter of his, published then, reflected upon the patient Monroe, who by that time knew the difficulties of taking care of a military hero.

The way of the election of 1824 has been shown in the chapter on John Quincy Adams. That worthy admirer of military aggressiveness was never more surprised than when the general whom he had suc-

cessfully backed in the cabinet and before diplomats began to be suggested for the presidency—that place prepared for himself and for which he had been so perfectly trained. This suggestion came after Jackson's return from governing Florida; and forthwith, in 1822, the Tennessee legislature made the formal nomination. Suddenly the natural aspirants were confronted by a new, terribly formidable rival.

It does not appear that the general, tired, ill, irritable and feeling old, started his own campaign or cared much about it at first. He probably had a saving sense of what he was fitted for, which if let alone would have kept him from that ambition. Besides, he had no natural love for civil office. But his friend, neighbour and connection, Major William B. Lewis, had presidential aspirations for him, and gradually worked them into his mind where, once entered, they were sure to stay. Lewis was a true lover of his hero, whom he understood thoroughly. He knew also the class of men who love a hero, and how to operate upon them at long distance through intricate lines of personal influence. His talent for wire-pulling he laid at Jackson's feet, apparently never a self-seeker. With a set of men equally devoted, he worked incessantly for two years to make connections for Jackson, and, though outside the machine, put at work a sure machinery for the future.

The last Congressional caucus nominated Crawford as its candidate. It was controlled by Senator Martin Van Buren of New York. Opposing his efforts was the great New Yorker, DeWitt Clinton, who was for Jackson.

Pennsylvania soon seconded Tennessee's nomination, Calhoun consenting to stand for the place of vice-president. Meanwhile Crawford had had a

stroke of paralysis. Thus the Jackson ball was rolling up huge. Yet, in high councils, the victor of New Orleans was looked upon as the most impossible of candidates. Jefferson declared, "I feel very much alarmed at the prospect of seeing General Jackson president. He is one of the most unfit men I know of for the place. He has had very little respect for laws or constitutions, and is, in fact, an able military chief." And Clay considered him the least desirable of his rivals.

Jackson had been elected to the Senate the year before the general election, so that when the lack of a majority in the electoral college threw the case into the House of Representatives, he was in Washington to watch it through. When his defeat came, he seemed at first to take it like a soldier and an urbane *grand homme*; but soon it became plain that he was going in factiously for a personal victory. To this end he and his partisans began to stop at nothing. They made a Frankenstein out of the charge of "corrupt bargain," which lived popularly longer than Adams or Clay. Denials and the fact of no substantiation were met only with reiteration. During the very first year of Adams's administration the Tennessee legislature nominated for the presidency its candidate, whose popularity seemed to have fattened on defeat. The general accepted the nomination in an address before the legislature of his State. He then resigned his seat in the Senate.

At this time Van Buren became convinced that the Jackson force was to win; so he cunningly made himself its leader in New York, and undertook to bring over to it the friends of Crawford. In that State, as in Pennsylvania, the spoils system had become highly developed. Van Buren had lived in its

atmosphere since his political beginning, until he was "the little magician" in adroit management. His experience he now brought to the Jackson camp. This was led also by Lewis, Benton, Edward Livingston and Eaton. They began an offensive campaign. They started local Jackson committees throughout the country for the dissemination of campaign material, and country newspapers were instituted to carry on the same kind of propaganda, by furnishing such statements and arguments as would bias public opinion. Fairness and truth went out of the market.

These politicians were violent and untiring in opposing every measure of the administration; and when there was a lull they simply reiterated the charge that Jackson had been cheated out of the executive chair.

Adams himself was a large target for them. He had very definite and advanced views about the development of the country, and he believed that those who administered the government should freely propose good schemes. Thus many points for attack were uncovered, and the sharp-shooters were always ready. When the new Congress met in 1827, there were opposition or Jackson majorities in both Houses.

The outcome of these five years of rancour was the triumphant election of Andrew Jackson in 1828. He had 178 votes; Adams had 83. Of the popular vote 648,273 were for Jackson, 508,064 for Adams.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PEOPLE'S PRESIDENT.

JACKSON'S election to the presidency was accompanied by vast popular hurrahing. It was considered the triumph of the plain people over the caste of aristocratic statesmen. Adams and his adherents had wondered why truth could not catch up with the campaign lies; why, for instance, nobody took interest in the administration's denials of sumptuous furnishings for the White House, and in its disavowals of billiard tables and chessmen bought with public funds; but all demonstrations which might have effect upon a jury of thoughtful men were really lacking in pertinence in that upheaving campaign, for the election of a people's man was foreordained. The popular impulses which overthrew the elder Adams and lifted up Jefferson nearly a generation before, had now again been as inevitable in hustling aside the second Adams, representative of "quality," and enthroning the new idol of the masses.

Prodigious preparations were made for the triumphal progress of Jackson from the Hermitage to Washington. Even Washington's historic journey over flower-strewed roads to his inauguration was to pale beside the progress of this modern hero to his own. Pittsburg had supplied a steamboat to bring him up the Ohio, and every city on the route had devised original methods of welcome.

But in the midst of these preparations occurred the

death of Jackson's cherished wife. He was sorely hurt that this faithful woman could not share the approaching triumphs, and he was embittered afresh at the campaign slanders, recklessly uttered by some, which had cut her to the soul and which her husband believed hastened her death. One cannot observe the profound effect of this sorrow upon his spirit without wishing to be able to revise several previously formed opinions of him; chivalry, tenderness, constancy, form a combination which is not the mark of an altogether unrestrainable man. It is pleasant to dwell upon the strong domesticity of Jackson, which is as heroic as his fighting. He won to his devotion, family, slaves, and near friends by his kindly and large heart. His faults, his roughness, his weak and vehement sensitiveness to opposition, seemed to have been turned outward towards the world, so that they who lived nearest to him knew only a big and sympathetic nature.

But if the elaborateness of some of the official plans for his journey to Washington were abated partially out of respect for his grief, the people's salutations were no less hearty. A running line of popular outbursts met him all the way up the broad Ohio river, and thence along the nation's great highway from Pittsburg to the capital. It was the American imperial road widened from a pioneer's path to the channel through which the unending wagon-trains were carrying civilization from the seaboard to the West; and its populous towns and country-sides turned out to greet the national idol, the type of the fresh, free life of the West, as he rode back to the East in the name of newer peoples.

Jackson reached Washington while the electoral votes were being formally counted in Congress, and in time to hear the cannon fired at the official announce-

ment of his election. The Fourth of March was bright and clear. The city saw such a crowd as had never appeared there before. There was a huge influx of the plain people. Judge Story called them "King Mob." The more astute of the statesmen recognized in the composition of the joyous crowds the beginning of a new political era; it was possible to discern that the time had come when the early anxiety of New England lest the power be shifted westward was justified; and it must have been evident that day that the population along the great rivers and of the prairie cities would no longer submit to the dictation of the Atlantic strip. Yet probably none were prescient enough to perceive in the jubilant confusion of that inauguration that a new age for the People as a whole had also begun; that they were going to be aware of their wants and would have their way henceforth without the stately trammels of the past forty years; and that the old régime of caste and precedent in statesmanship and of ordered training for the presidency was over forever.

The new President would not call upon the outgoing one. He gave as reasons the old "bargain" accusation of four years before, which was an essential of his creed, and also that he felt that Adams, if he had desired, could have prevented his supporters from uttering the slanderous things about Mrs. Jackson. He set out afoot from Gadsby's Hotel, attended by a wholly unordered retinue of officials, magnates, and everybody, all walking as they chose. The throng allowed Chief Justice Marshall to administer the oath of office and the President to deliver one of the briefest and most non-committal inauguration addresses ever given; and then they went through all barriers and fairly mobbed him in their enthusiasm;

they hung to his stirrups back to the White House, they swept over the lawn and choked the rooms so that men were crushed and the windows had to be opened to provide escape.

It was the people's day throughout the country. Never before had there been such furious rejoicing over a president; never before had such preparations been made for the speediest transmission of a president's first speech. The railway was not yet, but the relays of horsemen made speedier time than was accomplished by the locomotive for many years after its arrival. At Providence, for instance, an impatient crowd awaited the Sound steamboat which was to bring the message. Before the gang-plank touched the wharf the captain leaped ashore with the precious message wound about a rawhide whip. This he gave to a horseman who raced to Pawtucket, where another courier galloped along by his side, took from him his treasure and ran at top speed to Mansfield. Two more relays brought it to the hand of the Governor in Boston State House, just two hours and forty-five minutes from the Providence wharf—a feat which the modern railway could not improve by over seventy minutes.

That class of the political public designated as the People must not, however, be construed to mean everybody. Jackson had received a popular vote of 647,231, but Adams had commanded a vote of 507,097. These half-million voters had not bowed the knee to hero worship; they had political opinions which Adams's orderly and enlightened policy had helped to define; and they saw no gain in a general overturning as an end in itself. They had not voted against Jackson because of opposition to his political views, for neither he nor his supporters had advanced

any that were definite. They, as Republicans, had opposed him, a Republican, because they considered his onslaught objectionable and because they approved the Adams policy.

These of the opposition to the new administration called themselves National Republicans. They were far enough, however, from the strong National creed of modern Republicanism; they were still of Jefferson's great Democratic-Republican party. Nevertheless, they had gone a good way beyond Jefferson. Without having taken on in the least the old Federal haughtiness, they squinted towards several of the doctrines the Federalists held or would have held. They were "loose constructionists" of the Constitution; they leaned towards an increasing development of Federal functions; they wanted to see the internal improvements of roads, canals, rivers and harbours advanced at government expense; they believed that a Federal tariff, designed to protect and encourage infant industries, was a proper thing; they were gratified at the general effect of the Bank of the United States upon the country's finances.

Upon these doctrines Jackson's inaugural message was non-committal, although with some of them he had been supposed to be in sympathy. But apparently the fact that they were held by his opponents aided him in deciding that these were among the things to be attacked. At any rate, before his first administration was over he was the avowed enemy of internal improvements by the government, of a protective tariff, and of the Bank of the United States; and he claimed to be devoted to strict construction of the Constitution and the champion of the sacred rights of the States in everything short of rebellion and disunion.

The first head to be hit, however, was not the doctrines of his opponents, but themselves. To whatever extent they held the offices at the disposal of government, they were the obvious subjects for the new reform.

"Recall to your recollection the Fourth of March, 1829, when lank, lean, famished forms from fen and forests, and the four quarters of the Union, gathered together, in the halls of patronage, or, stealing by evening's twilight into the apartments of the President's mansion, cried out with ghastly faces and sepulchral tones, 'Give us bread, give us Treasury pap, give us our reward.' England's bard was mistaken—ghosts will sometimes come, called or uncalled."

This ghoulish description by Henry Clay of the office-seekers who flocked to Jackson's inauguration gives one explanation for that strange multitude which had made the capital wonder. With expectation written on their faces, all sorts of campaign workers were on hand to remind the President of their claims. His campaign had been wholly personal: he had promised lavishly that the good men who fought for him should enter upon the inheritance of government offices which he intended to purge of their present holders. Therefore the crowd of expectants who had assembled at the day of their opportunity. They had pulled down a president in order to set up another; and now the new lord was to drive out one set of incumbents from the minor offices in order to establish another set,—themselves. "Routine in office" was the name of the new principle, and they declared it good.

Heretofore, rotation had been confined to the president and cabinet. No previous president had thought

of going further, least of all of offering the public offices as a reward for votes. The former chief executives had been elected either in a kind of presidential succession, or, as in Jefferson's case, in the victory of a new set of principles. They had not entered the chair beholden, except in some limited sense. Jefferson had gone in with the new Republicanism, but he never dreamt of a wholesale removal of Federalist office-holders; he was even reluctant to oust John Adams' midnight appointees. Jackson's predecessor had removed no one for personal cause, though he would have been more politic if he had discharged some of the officials who were using the government's position to overthrow their chief. The whole record of removals under previous presidents had been:

Washington	9	persons
Adams	10	"
Jefferson	39	"
Madison	5	"
Monroe	9	"
Adams	2	"

In forty years only seventy-four office-holders had been discharged. Undoubtedly the service would have gained if the presidents had been more alert to introduce new men with more efficient methods; Jackson, as a very practical man, had discerned this point of weakness and had proclaimed his intention of turning out unworthy incumbents, although he had no scheme for insuring the new men to be better than the old ones.

His otherwise rather commonplace inaugural address sounded the note of his reform:—

"The recent demonstration of public sentiment inscribes on the list of executive duties, in characters too legible to be overlooked, the task of reform, which will require, particularly, the correction of those abuses which have brought the patronage of the Federal government into conflict with the freedom of electors."

One has to question whether these inflated expressions have the ring of genuineness. Be that as it may, they heralded the onslaught upon his late opponents who held public office, and the appointment, in their places, of his friends and partisans.

Proscription began immediately. During the first year removals went up to 700. About 500 postmasters were displaced, and the new incumbents brought a new army of clerks to supplant the old ones. Men who had grown aged in the service were discharged without warning, and the suffering of suddenly impoverished families was widespread. But the reform was clearly popular. There were more who were pleased to see new faces in the offices than there were who took up cudgels for the dispossessed. Public office became suddenly a new object of interest and desire—a chance for thousands at the whirl of the presidential wheel. There is little evidence that the deplorable effects of the new policy of making the offices the reward of the victorious every four years were appreciated at that period. The next time the voters expressed themselves it was in approval of Marcy's formula, "to the victors belong the spoils of victory."

Of the far-reaching results of this new corruption Jackson foresaw nothing and cared nothing. He was ruggedly simple in purpose; but seemingly he was less concerned to discover the courses of honesty,

patriotism, and soundness, and to put himself therein, than he was to demand that the courses he adopted be considered by all men as honest, patriotic and sound. There was a great untied arbitrariness of will, and that purely personal equation played a bigger part in Jackson's administration than in any other before or since. Some of the more conspicuous affairs in which his capriciousness was on top, during his first term, had better be reviewed first.

The conscientious scruples which Jackson had in 1825 against the eligiblity of members of Congress to offices controlled by the president vanished in 1829; he took four members of his cabinet directly from Congress. Notwithstanding this forage, his cabinet was considered weak. Martin Van Buren, whom he made Secretary of State, was, in reputation, its only strong man. He proved to be the only one influential with the President. Jackson declared that he did not expect to lean upon advisers, but to be himself the head and front of executive business. This was a marked change, for the secretaries had previously enjoyed a larger place than made for them by the Constitution. Jackson cut down their responsibility nearer to that of clerks. He also disregarded the support of coöperation by doing away with cabinet councils.

But though he was averse to allowing his actions to be checked by those who might be considered constitutional advisers, he was the very kind of strong man to be greatly influenced by those to whom he gave his confidence or to those who succeeded in getting his. Thus, while he rode roughly over his necessary secretaries, it was inevitable that he should have a political family outside, whose service and devotion were purely personal. Such an arrangement suited

the needs of his temperament and eliminated much friction. That it was hardly dignified is evidenced by the name, "Kitchen Cabinet," given to this outside coterie.

They were William B. Lewis, Amos Kendall, Isaac Hill and Duff Green. Lewis's genius as a politician and its utter devotion to his kinsman have been previously mentioned. Kendall was a Massachusetts man who hailed from Kentucky. He had quarrelled with Clay and, in consequence, became influential with Jackson. In Washington he came to be regarded as the mover of the whole administration. He had acumen, with executive and literary ability; but these were servile to partisan ends. Duff Green was editor of the *Telegraph*, at that time the administration newspaper of Washington. He was a retainer under Calhoun and, in 1831, when he had to choose between chiefs, went over with his paper to the South Carolinian. But during the first years of the administration he gave Jackson a fighting allegiance. Isaac Hill was also an editor, and was an upbuilder of the Democratic party in New Hampshire. His hard work in that State for Jackson in 1828 brought him into the confidence of the administration.

Such were the men who worked under the President. They held no important offices. Van Buren was content to see these subordinates do the labour, so long as they worked for his coming principalship.

Another man who had some share of influence was John H. Eaton, who was in the regular cabinet as Secretary of War. His first wife had been a niece of Mrs. Jackson. He had married for the second time shortly before Jackson came into office. About his choice he consulted Jackson, who advised him to go ahead if the lady suited him. She was Mrs. Timber-

lake, formerly Peggy O'Neil, the daughter of a tavern-keeper, one whose name had been touched by Washington gossip. When remonstrances came to Jackson against an appointment which would introduce this lady into the cabinet circle, he was chivalrously indignant. He appointed the husband to be Secretary, and when the other ladies of the cabinet would not recognize the wife, he began to try to make them. Mrs. Eaton has been made memorable as the woman who virtually broke up a cabinet. If that is too important a part to assign to her, it is at least unquestioned that making a way for this lady was attended with a good deal of bad feeling. The feminine rancour set Jackson and Van Buren (both widowers) as Eaton champions against the rest of the cabinet and their wives, who were led by Vice-President and Mrs. Calhoun. Jackson carried championship far beyond sense or taste, yet there was in it at first, at least, a generous and gallant motive, which was inseparable from the man, and which provokes admiration if not agreement.

Possibly there was in this persistent piece of cabinet scandal one of the causes which parted Jackson and Calhoun; but deeper ones were already at work, and their seriousness requires more attention.

Mr. Calhoun had stepped aside in 1824, to give the race to the four strongest runners; by so doing he had fallen easily into the second place. After Jackson's defeat he saw that he must again give way to let the popular idol have his turn. This he did and took gratefully the vice-presidency again. This time, however, he was allowed to feel confident that 1832 would bring the first prize to him. He had turned the South to Jackson instead of to Adams; it was natural that he should be Jackson's successor. Per-

haps Jackson entered office thinking so too. But Calhoun was watched by enemies. Crawford had always resented his rivalry in the South.

Crawford was infirm in health and stranded politically, but he was vigorous in venom. Between him and Jackson's managers there was an early but secret understanding. He poisoned Lewis's mind with suspicions of Calhoun's loyalty to Jackson, and Lewis distilled the poison into Jackson's mind when the ripe opportunity came. Van Buren was discreet, the delight of those whose intrigues were carrying him aloft. He saw that his rival for Jackson's favour and for the presidency was in crushing hands, and he was the last one to interfere. Finally a letter was submitted to Jackson from Crawford, in which the latter accused Calhoun of proposing to Monroe and his cabinet, in 1818, that General Jackson should be punished for his course in the Seminole war. Jackson had been already sufficiently excited to have this the sign for rage. He was unable to stop to consider the character of this disclosure—that of a secret cabinet council, held more than ten years before to decide upon the public policy of an administration—betrayed by a member of that cabinet. He had only the personal vision; at a certain juncture Calhoun had not been his partisan, therefore Calhoun had never been true to him, could not be trusted, and must be cast out of his, the autocrat's, favour. The President wrote to the Vice-President to demand whether he, as Secretary of War, had ever attempted to injure him, the general, in Monroe's cabinet. Calhoun replied, refusing to recognize General Jackson's right to call in question his official conduct. But he must have realized that Crawford had served him according to enmity, and that he was forever dislodged. Cal-

houn's letter had not the lofty tone which his case warranted; whereas the President assumed grand hauteur in his reply, in which he dismissed from his intimacy one whom he now set down as perfidious.

This real rupture between the chief officers of the nation was in 1830, but it did not break out openly until the beginning of the next year, when Calhoun published the correspondence. Jackson prepared an exposition to answer it, but that was kept from print during his life, appearing first in Benton's *Thirty Years' View.*

This quarrel and the Eaton affair accomplished the dissolution of the cabinet. Three of its members were for Calhoun. In order to force their resignation, those within the President's clique resigned first. Van Buren's letter skilfully announced his candidature for the presidency. He was immediately appointed minister to England by the President, and set out for that post. But his appointment made during a recess missed confirmation in the Senate, owing to Calhoun's casting vote. This was excessively irritating to Jackson, who could never endure that his dictations to Congress should be set aside. Against Calhoun's retaliation he put his purpose that Van Buren should be "Vice-President now, and President afterward." It is plain, however, that the Secretary of State had been the President's favourite candidate almost from the start, or at least the suggestion was early lodged in his mind, for subsequent events to ripen into determination. When his health was precarious, in 1829, he was induced to write a letter to his friend, Judge Overton, for posthumous use only in case he died before 1832, expressing his approval of Van Buren. This was but precautionary, for his untiring friends began early to pull the wires for his

own renomination. Lewis, in March, 1830, suggested to a Pennsylvania legislator that it would be well for a spontaneous demand for the President's reëlection to come from that State. This was forthcoming, and the President tacitly assented to it, yielding his scruples against a second term.

It is evident how conspicuous a part the President's personal equation was playing in this administration. Every issue took a decided colour from that personality. There were, however, several issues that can be better presented as separate topics than as episodes in the personal narrative.

There was during Jackson's term a good deal of the old disturbance between the Southern States and the Gulf Indians. These Indians, living within State boundaries, had their independent treaties with the Republic. Adams had upheld their treaty rights against State encroachments, and had been unpopular for it in the South. Jackson had never shown himself punctilious where the red man was concerned. Consequently, the expectation was that his executive attitude would favour the disposition of Georgia and Alabama to crowd out the Indians from their grants. Georgia in particular was working to rid herself of the Cherokees, who were civilized to some degree. Their industrial advance from tribal habits and their increase made them more of a problem, since while they were in the State they were not of it, but subject only to their own laws under the protection of the United States.

Georgia grew bold upon Jackson's election and made a law extending her jurisdiction over the Cherokee lands. The President in his first message said that he had told the Indians of Georgia and Alabama that he would not countenance their attempt to establish

an independent government, and had advised them either to migrate or to submit to the laws of the States. Congress passed an act appropriating liberally for the purpose of treating with the Indians regarding the sale or exchange of their lands, and of removing them to the new territory beyond the Mississippi, where some of their tribe were already settled. These removals were effected in the course of years, but the present result of the move was conflict all around, with an unfortunate precedent established.

The State of Georgia proceeded to lay off the Cherokee lands into counties, and to set her laws at work. The Indians resisted and appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States. The State court then defied the national Court, and the national Executive failed to support the national judiciary; he withdrew the Federal troops and the Georgia militia had the field. There were very good arguments for not permitting independent governments within the States; as Jackson put it, Would the people of New York or Maine have permitted them? But the legislature and court of Georgia had been judiciously recalcitrant and the national Executive had upheld them.

On the subject of internal improvements, the President kept in the precise line of Madison and Monroe. Madison had vetoed a bill to create a fund for building roads and canals and improving the navigation of rivers, the cautious reason being that he doubted government's power to do it. Monroe had vetoed the Cumberland Road bill for the same reason, discussing comprehensively the whole question. This was not really a party issue then; no one then questioned the good of the schemes if they were really national,

not local nor for private advantage; but the constitutionality bothered the statesmen.

Jackson took his place with these predecessors when in the first session of Congress he vetoed a bill for government subscription to the stock of the Maysville Road, but the position was bolder since Adams had educated a party in national schemes and a large body of citizens had become involved in the public outlays.

At the next session of Congress the majorities in favour of a bill for improvements were too large for him to risk a veto. The following winter he signed a similar bill. His annual messages were strongly against a national expenditure of the surplus. When surplus existed he had at first favoured its distribution among the States, but he soon came to hold that plan to be obnoxious as special legislation. It was late in his first term that he disposed of a bill, directing the distribution of revenue derived from the sale of public lands among the several States, by a constitutional provision which allows the President to hold a bill over for ten days before signing or vetoing it, and which further declares that if Congress adjourns during that period with the bill unsigned, the bill does not become a law. The undesired bills coming to Jackson two days before the adjournment of Congress were kept in his pocket until after adjournment. This method, unused before, was called a Pocket Veto.

The question of protective tariff became both important and sectional between the years of 1816 and 1828. At the start, under the lead of Clay and Calhoun, the West and South were its advocates, while the New Englanders, headed by Webster, were quite largely its opponents. Strangely enough, it was the fashion

in New England to deplore the stimulated development of factories and to prefer the personal and economic advantages of an agricultural life; but that was before railroads made New England farming profitless. Webster, believing that he expressed Massachusetts preferences, opposed protection as an end in itself as late as 1824.

But Clay's "American policy" of protection had gradually prevailed. The new industries developed by the embargo and by the war measures of the recent conflict with England, had grown from nurselings to public importance, and they asked further protection from the Federal government. Notwithstanding New England's early opposition to stimulated industries, they had flourished best in the Northern and Eastern States. After the tariff bill of 1824, which provided for higher protection and which Webster opposed, New England promptly took a new leap into manufacturing. As Webster explained afterwards, in giving account for his own change of view on the question of protection, the South and West had forced a protective policy upon the country, and New England simply adapted herself to the new conditions, invested her capital in factories, and now, as a point of pure expediency, wanted more protection. Certainly Northern capitalists and politicians and citizens generally had become profoundly interested in manufactures, and for simple business reasons discussed the tariff from a new point of view. They no longer started with the first principles of Adam Smith; they ceased to be moved by the academic argument.

On the other hand, the South had become reactionary. She discovered that the North was getting the plums. She comprehended that she was likely to be

essentially agricultural, and she began to complain vehemently that her cotton and tobacco supported the government by paying tribute to Northern shops.

In 1828 a new tariff bill, further aiding Northern industries, brought the disaffection to a violent head. Calhoun, old protective ally of Clay's, was now at the head of the Southern fight; and Webster, the old free-trader, was now the high protectionist. Neither was inconsistent; conditions had changed, both North and South; neither theorized now, but advocated frankly what had come to seem most advantageous to his section.

"A bill of abominations" was the Southern title for the Tariff Act of 1828, which especially helped woolen manufactures. The grievance of the South was that its interests as a section of the Union were sacrificed by the majority. However large the proportion of truth in this complaint, it has no bearing on the sober decision of those and later times that the particular performance of South Carolina in defying a Federal law was, as a remedy, unwarranted arrogant, and wrong.

Immediately upon the passage of the bill in May, 1828, the South Carolina delegation to Congress met to devise steps for resisting the operation of the law. Passion grew hotter as summer advanced, and by autumn the South Carolina legislature passed its celebrated "exposition and protest," which originated from Calhoun,—an utterance which expressed distinctly and defiantly the right of a State to nullify an act of Congress which it might decide to be unconstitutional. When South Carolina and other Southern States began to declare that these new Federal taxes were unconstitutional, and therefore null and void, they stepped from a firm ground for debate—free

trade or protection—into the swamp of disunion and anarchy.

Nevertheless, they were not without precedent in that spirit of criticism and of professed right of withdrawal which the States had all originally believed passed into the constitutional compact from the old Confederacy. These avowed States' rights were always acting upon the cement of the Union. From the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions in 1798 down to the War of Secession in 1861, the threatening attitude of withdrawal was possible to any State. When Jefferson wrote the Kentucky Resolutions he put into formula this tendency to split. Yet, as adopted, they were not explicity nullifying; and in the Resolutions of Virginia Madison gave no expression to anything more stringent than a solemn protest against the Alien and Sedition laws—a harmless remonstrance compared with the declarations, expositions, protests, denunciations and laws which South Carolina began straightway to emit against the order of the Federal government.

South Carolina might have excited more sympathy if her congressmen had been beyond the suspicion of having, in the vote on the tariff bill, contrived a trap by which the State might seem to be a martyr; certainly the Northern vote had been very much divided on the subject, and no section held itself responsible for the bill. When the Southern free traders in their public meetings first began to talk of nullification, they were met by such a spirit of resentment and resistance throughout the country that they should have been advised that they had taken the wrong road. Further exasperation was in the arrogance of the South Carolina legislature in advertising the postponement of the operation of its veto until another

Congress could revise the obnoxious law, as well as in the privately expressed hope that the new President would condone nullification.

But the sentiment of nationality under the Constitution had made great growth since the War of 1812. The Union was no longer experimental, and the nullifiers had not reckoned on the widespread and deep feeling that a State's secession would be an awful and irreparable wrong. Up to this time the growing spirit of unity was not fully aware of itself, and it was the lot of Daniel Webster, in the greatest of American speeches, to give it determined and undying expression.

Jackson's first Congress assembled in December, 1829, with the question of nullification present in the public mind. The incident which precipitated the great debate was a resolution concerning the sale of public lands. The discussion ran on for weeks with enlarging significance; the responsibility for the famous ordinance of 1787 excluding slavery from the Northwestern Territory, the effect of slavery upon different states, the Missouri controversy and the Hartfort Convention, were successive steps. In defending the character of the Hartford Convention, Webster retaliated by charging South Carolina with disloyalty in her recent resolves and proposals. Senator Hayne, of South Carolina, in replying was led into a statement and a defence of nullification. By this time the attention of the country was upon the great debate, and when Webster arose, on January 26, 1830, to make his final reply to Hayne, the Senate chamber was packed with earnest listeners who had travelled from afar to witness the end of the portentous duel.

Webster's speech, which fills seventy octavo pages

and occupied four hours in delivery, marked his own zenith and was the most magnificent oration ever delivered in Congress. Under Hayne's violent personal attack he had sat unexpressive. A few hours were taken for specific preparation for the reply, but his whole career and his entire wealth of thought were his real preparation. He said afterwards that everything that had ever passed through his mind seemed to be mustered just above him, waiting for use. Superlative as is the speech in the printed book, how much it must have been to those that heard the wonderful voice and saw the unapproachable orator. Probably no other American has ever carried so godlike an appearance. Carlyle, no lover of America, was his enthusiastic admirer; Sydney Smith exclaimed, "Why, he is a small cathedral in himself;" the London navvies followed him, saying, "There goes a king." Somebody said "No one can possibly be so great as Webster looks to be." On the day of that speech he seemed to have some prescience of the momentous value it was to have in years to come in saving the Union. "It is a critical moment," said a New England senator to him as they were entering the chamber on January 26, "and it is time, it is high time that the people of this country should know what this Constitution *is*." "Then," replied Webster, "by the blessing of heaven, they shall learn this day, before the sun goes down, what I understand it to be."

That was the *motif* of the great deliverance. He set forth, with unanswerable eloquence, his conception of the Union, and it convinced the mass of the people that it was their conception too, though they had not expressed it before. The ideas of the strength of the Union which were held in 1789, in 1799, in

1814, were not pertinent now; the question was the proper idea of the Union which should be held in 1830, after forty years of trial, sacrifice, and welding of State interests into national unity of spirit and purpose. He declared nullification to be unconstitutional and revolutionary—the signal of dismemberment—the ruin of the experiment of free government.

This speech not only arrested the arrogance of the nullifiers in Congress, but it also put weapons into the hands of the friends of Union everywhere. It was the definition of nationality the nation had awaited. Washington had been full of the downcast faces of Union men as the long debate had worn on; but after this speech there was a confidence as if the victory had been won. For thirty years thereafter those burning words of "union, one and inseparable" were declaimed in the country schoolhouses, until a generation grew up which fought four years of civil war to uphold the Union which Webster that day defined.

A few weeks after the Webster speech nullification received another blow which in its immediate effect upon the plotters was much more severe. It was from Jackson himself. The South Carolinians had counted on him. They had seen his disposition to allow the Gulf States to override the nation's treaties with the Indians, and they conceived that he would not be unfriendly to their repudiation of the displeasing tariff law. But this hope was exploded at a public dinner given in Washington in April of 1830, to celebrate Jefferson's birthday. President Jackson was one of the invited guests. The regular toasts, twenty-four in number, smacked of the new Southern heresy. At their conclusion the President was asked to volunteer one. He thereupon gave his flash-

ing Union toast: "Our Federal Union: It must be preserved." In its simple brevity it contained more than the nullifiers had hoped for. It recognized their position and defied it. The Vice-President in giving the next toast also took his stand. He said: "The Union: next to our Liberty the most dear: may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States, and distributing equally the benefit and burthen of the Union."

Behind this open conflict there was personal collision; the rupture between the first and second officers of the government had begun during the winter; and as Calhoun espoused the cause of his State, Jackson became more pronounced in his feeling against it. Yet it is unfair to attribute to that calamitous feud Jackson's decisive action in regard to South Carolina. As the head of the nation it was natural that he should be jealous for the integrity of the whole, and he would no doubt have spoken those same words if he and Calhoun had not been pulling apart.

Southern States were disappointed that their President, who with the party stood in general for unprotected industries, for tariff limited to the needs of revenue, and who was an extreme opponent of internal improvements conducted by the nation, did not sanction their methods. He told the citizens of Charleston in a letter to their committee, replying to an invitation to attend the Fourth of July celebration of 1831 in that city, that his policy towards nullification would be force. The legislature promptly denounced the letter. In his annual message to the Twenty-second Congress the President recognized the surplus that would accrue from the tariff and recommended that the duties be diminished in order to

lessen revenue. The battle of industrial interests was carried on in Congress for six months before the final tariff of 1832 was reached. This abolished many revenue taxes. It reduced others, so that the revenue was cut down by three millions of dollars. But protection as a principle and as a fact was saved.

The South was not in the least degree appeased by this measure, although the reëlection of Jackson in the autumn of 1832 held out promise that a high protective tariff was doomed with the defeat of its party. But South Carolina had not been interested in the second election of her former hero. The nullifiers were now in control of her legislature, and a convention was ordered to be held. It met soon after the presidential election in 1832, and passed "An ordinance to nullify certain acts of the Congress of the United States, purporting to be laws laying duties and imposts on the importation of foreign commodities." This ordinance was officially communicated to the President. It was to go into effect the following February.

General Jackson's temper was suited to such an emergency. He sent General Scott to Charleston, and two war vessels. Troops were gathered where they would be available. This was done promptly but quietly. His message to Congress was unagitated, still advocating the just limitation of the protective system. Shortly afterwards he issued a proclamation to the people of South Carolina. It was an admirable paper, dignified, strong, and moderate. No fault was found with it. Whether Edward Livingston the new Secretary of State or Jackson himself wrote it is not essential. It went forth as the becoming utterance of the President of the Union to a refractory State. The result to himself

was a new access of popularity throughout the North and West. The Southerners were undoubtedly surprised at his views of the Constitution, for they seemed very hostile to States' rights. 'Old John Randolph, whose fire had almost gone out in age, was aroused by this message to make a last charge for State prestige. Mr. Benton, who eulogizes so faithfully his friend in his *Thirty Years' View*, declares that in all his proceedings the President had a twofold intent—to relieve the honest discontent of the masses and to enforce the authority of the government; that bills for the reduction of the tariff went hand in hand with proclamation and preparation. This was the paternalism which offended John Quincy Adams's sense of what was meet.

Before the beginning of 1833 Calhoun resigned the vice-presidency, which had yet two months to run. He went into the Senate in order to take a part in the last scenes of the struggle. He had become wholly identified with an issue which, although by compromise it seemed to gain its ends, was generally odious and upon which Jackson had put his foot. He and his State got the cold shoulder. Unsuccess was not to him the moral and mental spur that it was to Mr. Adams. His mind became more or less wound up in its own metaphysics and gradually ceased to be an applied force, though he represented his State until his death.

The winter months of Congress were absorbed in dealing with South Carolina and the tariff. In January the President asked for various executive powers. Calhoun made active opposition, but the Senate granted them. A bill to enforce the collection of the revenue and the compromise tariff bill played games between the two Houses, until finally the two were enacted almost simultaneously.

The new tariff reduced all duties which had been made over twenty per cent. by a sliding scale till twenty per cent. as a horizontal rate should be reached in 1842. Clay claimed that by his great effort the compromise saved protection. Calhoun claimed it as a victory for free trade, forced by nullification. Thus the settlement became new matter for future dispute. The nullifiers did not nullify on the day appointed. Instead, they resolved in legislature that Jackson was a usurper and tyrant. Jackson threatened the leaders with hanging. The new tariff law went into effect on the same day as the one nullified, and a few days later the nullifying convention repealed its ordinance. The anti-tariff excitement closed exactly with the end of General Jackson's first administration, so that he entered upon the next four years with State mutiny laid.

Of even greater significance than his triumph over nullification was Jackson's relation to the Bank of the United States. In his first message to his first Congress the new President began an open war upon this institution. He there advised an inquiry into the constitutionality of the bank, and into the expediency of giving to it a new charter when its present one should expire in 1836. To the old friends and enemies of that revived Federal institution the meaning of this advice was unmistakable; it revived that ancient Democratic doctrine which squared government financiering to a strict construction of the Constitution; and it gave a clear warning that this restrictive view would soon be made to cut a swathe through politics. It seems fairly certain, however, that the special antipathy towards the Bank which began to take shape in Jackson's mind soon after he was inaugurated, was largely on account of personal reasons.

Nicholas Biddle was president of the Bank. Mr. Biddle thwarted Jackson's man Isaac Hill, who wanted Jeremiah Mason removed from charge of the New Hampshire branch of the Bank. Mr. Biddle examined the case, and finding Mr. Mason's dealings square refused to remove him. Thus remotely did Jackson's combative instinct find personal ground, and making another man's grudge his own began to compass the downfall of the institution which Mr. Biddle headed. Probably Jackson, while going unreasoningly into the struggle, had an instinct that his attack would be popular. The Bank was a moneyed and therefore aristocratic institution, attached to government; and though it had been called into existence by a Republican administration to help pull the government out of financial distress after the War of 1812, still it had not a democratic complexion.

When Congress met again the President's message contained another attack upon the Bank, this time more unequivocal; and in like manner his message to the Twenty-Second Congress reverted to the subject, but more warily this time, for the election was near and he could not afford to lose the vote of Pennsylvania, the stronghold of the Bank. The next move was made by the Bank, which presented a memorial for the renewal of its charter. It was forced on all sides to make a strike for life. The exigencies of the coming campaign left it no alternative, for Jackson's hostility had unfortunately turned the whole question into politics. Clay had had to arrange his programme to meet Jackson's, and he decided to make the tariff and the Bank leading issues, thus forcing the Bank to run the chances of its advocate. It had friends in both parties who were averse to thrusting it foremost into the campaign.

The question being up, an investigation into the affairs of the Bank was demanded by administration supporters in the House. The committee appointed for this purpose gave a small majority report unfavourable to a recharter, under present conditions. The minority found the Bank reliable and worthy of an extension of charter. Upon the heel of a long Congressional struggle, the bill to give a new charter in 1836 was passed in House and Senate. The President's veto, which had been expected, came. The Senate attempted to pass the bill over the veto by a two-thirds vote, but was not successful. This happened in the summer before the election of 1832.

Though satisfied with what he had done the President was not satisfied that he had done enough, especially after the country sanctioned his autocratic will at the polls. Simply to defeat the future life of the Bank did not seem sufficient. His dislike for it growing, he now determined that it must be raided and ruined during the life yet left to it. In the last annual message of his first term, being the first after his second election, he proceeded in this direction, by expressing doubts as to the Bank's solvency and concern about the security of the public deposits in that institution. He recommended this subject for the serious investigation of Congress. This time the Committee on Ways and Means were the investigators. The majority of this Committee found the Bank sound and the funds safe. The resolutions of the House favoured the continuance of the national deposits in its keeping. Jackson was seemingly thwarted in his attempt to blast the Bank by fiat. But he had another term in which to finish his fight.

CHAPTER XV.

AN AUTOCRATIC PRESIDENT.

It was in the air, in 1832, that the reëlection of Jackson was foreordained. That is, it is clear now that there were indications enough then to make it certain that nobody but Jackson would be elected. But instead of seeing the hopelessness of opposition, the fight for other candidates was waged with hopeful intensity, and at least one of the candidates staked immense hazard on his chance of election. This candidate was Henry Clay. He had been in training for the presidency for more than a score of years; he was the ablest statesman in Congress; he was sick with longing for the great prize. To make an unsuccessful attempt was likely to spoil his chance for another nomination for the presidency. Nevertheless Clay felt that the growing public opposition to Jackson's despotism was cumulative enough to justify the personal risk. Two Adamses had been defeated for reëlection; a Jackson might be. The opposition which looked to Clay as its natural leader had not yet assumed the name of Whig, but was still designated as the National Republican party as against the Democratic-Republican party of Jackson. It embodied certain tendencies which had crystallized under Monroe and J. Q. Adams; a national sense and sentiment, a devotion to the Union as an entity apart from the uniting States, the development of the nation by protective tariff and by internal meth-

ods of improved communication; a strong government which could foster the nation's advance as a whole.

Clay had laboured for all these things, and could not refuse the demand of the National Republicans that he head the assault on the administration at the general election.

This demand was made very definite by a popular convention, which met at Baltimore, December 12, 1831, and by another which met at Baltimore in May, 1832, confirming the nomination of the first. These conventions declared for a protective tariff, for internal improvements, and for the inviolability of both Supreme Court and Senate; they protested against the President's autocratic attitude towards the Bench and the Senate, against his war on the Bank, against his hostility to the tariff and internal improvements, against his surrender of the Indians' rights to the Gulf States, and particularly against his corruption of the civil service by the doctrine of "to the victors belong the spoils." These conventions nominated Henry Clay, of Kentucky, for president, and John Sargeant, of Pennsylvania, for vice-president.

But another Convention, also opposed to Jackson, had previously assembled and made nominations. Anti-Masonry was a popular fury at that time sweeping through the country. It had originated in the general horror at the alleged abduction and assassination of one Morgan, in western New York, for betraying the secrets of Masonry. The disavowal of the act by the Masonic fraternity had no effect in arresting the spread of the demand for the suppression of all secret societies as inimical to free institutions. As the agitation grew conventions met, lead-

ers were developed, and finally the upheaving movement came to consider itself a political party. Its leaders resolved to try to unite all opponents of Jackson under its banners, and accordingly they held a national convention at Baltimore in September, 1831, which was presided over by Chief Justice Marshall. They wanted Clay, but finally nominated for President William Wirt of Maryland. He told them candidly that he had been made a mason, and saw no harm in such masonry as George Washington had practised; nevertheless, they stood by their nomination and Wirt accepted.

Finally the Democratic-Republicans met in convention, also at Baltimore, in May, 1832. They came together for a single purpose—to start the Jackson ball rolling with all the prestige and sanction that the new-fashioned method of a national convention could impart. The published aim, however, was to nominate not a president so much as a vice-president,—Martin Van Buren, of New York, the mate desired by General Jackson. All opposition to Van Buren went down before the President's insistence, and after that nomination was made a unanimous resolution was passed, concurring in the nomination of General Jackson to a second term already made by several State legislatures.

No platform of principle was offered. The convention frankly presented the administration to the country on its personal merits. The issue on Jackson's side was therefore very simple; it was, "Do you like me and my ways? then reëlect me."

The situation thus produced is noteworthy, because it was the first time the national convention for the nominating of presidents came into being as an institution. It is an institution not provided for, nor

even dreamed of in the Constitution; yet it has prevailed uninterruptedly since 1832 because it is the only true method of carrying out the implied aim of the Constitution that the president shall spring from the people as a whole. The Congressional caucus for nominating a president, practised until 1824, was inevitable and unavoidable in a time when there were no railroads to make popular communication prompt; but it missed the point contemplated by the makers of the Constitution in that the executive was nominated by the legislative branch, and thus could not be wholly the creation of the people of the States. The custom of nominations by State legislatures, which began in 1824, was inadequate as a method, because local and sectional. The national convention came as an evolution: it arose from the need of having the chief executive put in nomination by the people themselves and by people representing all sections; it came as soon as steam, canals, and improved roads made a prompt intercommunication of views possible, and the travel of delegates feasible. It is also noteworthy that the first of these national conventions was held by the hobbyists of anti-masonry, and that the regular parties immediately adopted the new plan.

The triangular fight was vehement and rancorous. Jackson was the object of bitter vituperation. His autocratic policy was the cause of much dread. Portents in the sky were seen indicative of a coming military despotism. But the great majority of the people liked him and his ways. On one side was the concrete hero of New Orleans, and he was still fighting; presumably what he was now fighting was as detestable as the British. On the other side were confused voices; a hubbub of anti-masonry and a

long tale of new doctrines more or less incomprehensible, concerning which each man made his own definition.

In such a contest the result could not be doubtful. Jackson swept the country at the election in November, 1832. In his favour were 687,502 votes, while Clay and Wirt together were favoured with only 530,189. In the electoral college the Jackson ticket received 219 votes, as against 67 votes for all other tickets. The victory was of prodigious proportions, and its significance was obvious.

We have noted the popularity which attended General Jackson's earlier autocratic movements. His self-will from the start fascinated the multitude. When this multitude entrusted him with responsibility for the second time he considered that his policy of personal government had been unreservedly vindicated. His large popular majority acted upon him as an authorization for whatever he might choose to do in the next four years. By a transformation not uncommon, the champion of democracy found in himself an imposed right to tell the people what was good for them. The despotic will in him flourished. J. Q. Adams wrote trenchantly in his diary concerning the President's access of self-opinion thus: "There is a tone of insolence and insult in his intercourse with both Houses of Congress, especially since his reëlection, which was never witnessed between the Executive and the Legislature before."

For one thing, Jackson interpreted his reëlection as an express sanction of his opposition to the Bank of the United States. To his cabinet he said: "Whatever may be the opinion of others, the President considers his reëlection as a decision of the people against the Bank." In consequence he took im-

mediate steps towards that dispossessing of the Bank which nearly undid his popularity. He had now determined to withdraw from it by executive act the deposits of the United States. To say that he had determined leaves out of account the clandestine suggestions and schemes with which he was surrounded. The men who planned the fight were not seen. The belligerent personality of Jackson was the agent. In this case the men most responsible appear to have been Kendall, of the "kitchen cabinet," and Blair and Whitney, newly received members. Blair was editor of the *Globe*, the organ of the administration since Duff Green and his journal defected. Whitney was high in councils because he had made specific charges against the Bank. He continued to work in that same profitable vein.

Early in the new term McLane was transferred from the Treasury to the State department because he disfavoured a removal of the deposits. Cass, in the cabinet, was also opposed to it. Two other members were neutral. Lewis opposed it, and also Van Buren at first. But Jackson's purpose had by this time set, and he went quickly from one position to another. William J. Duane, son of the virulent editor of the *Aurora*, was selected to come to the Treasury for this particular purpose. He took the post but very soon showed himself unplastic. Jackson gave as reasons for the removal of the funds his own lack of confidence in Congress, and his fear lest Congress would be bought up by the Bank to give a new charter; he saw himself the saviour of the country from its own elected body. But he could not make his new Secretary see the situation in a light so discreditable to Congress.

The Bank charter did give the Secretary of the

Treasury power to remove the national deposits at discretion, but he was bound afterwards to give his reasons to Congress for the removal. His act must not come as a judgment on Congress, but was itself to be judged by that body. Jackson now assumed the position that he alone was responsible, the Secretary was merely a subordinate. In September he read a paper before his cabinet enumerating the sins of the Bank, and, claiming not to dictate to the Secretary, took upon himself the responsibility of deciding to stop deposits and to remove all money in the Bank on October 1, 1833. Nevertheless, Duane refused to be the agent; neither would he resign. Promptly he was dismissed from office, and Roger B. Taney, the Attorney-general, was put in the place of power. Jackson knew him to be of his own mind, and the necessary orders for removal went out.

This step, though rumoured since summer, was so extreme as to shock business at once. It also infuriated those who already disliked Jacksonian methods.

When the new Congress met, Secretary Taney presented his grounds for the removal, public interest being the sum of all. He asserted his power to remove the funds under direction of the President; that to remove them before the expiration of the Bank's charter had been a matter of expediency; he advised the use of State banks for government business. This whole session was taken up by discussions on this lively topic. The Senate, although Democratic, was hostile, for many States' rights members worked with the opposition. It rejected the President's government directors of the Bank, and then refused to confirm the appointment of Secretary Taney. Jackson was incensed at this and

nominated him for Judge of the Supreme Court. The Senate again refused to confirm. Two years later Jackson's will prevailed, and Taney became Marshall's successor as Chief Justice. The President's cabinet paper had been given to the public; but when the Senate asked for a copy, it was refused on the ground of cabinet privileges. Jackson announced his irresponsibility to Congress with a flourish of rhetoric about his responsibility to the American people. He demanded moreover that the Bank give up the care of the pension agency. The Senate voted that the pension funds could not be disturbed.

The strife went on until it culminated in the Senate resolutions, passed 16 to 20, of censure. They were: "That the President, in the late executive proceedings in relation to the public revenues, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both." And "That the reasons assigned by the Secretary for removal are unsatisfactory and insufficient." The President replied by a "Protest." This made a clever counter-charge of unconstitutionality in the vote of censure; impeachment of a President must originate in the House of Representatives and must be tried by the Senate, and must have a two-thirds vote; but this censure, which was a virtual impeachment, had originated in the Senate, which had then acted judicially upon its own charges, and had passed them by a mere majority vote.

Senator Benton immediately gave notice that he would offer an expunging resolution later. The Senate would not accept the President's protest, declaring it to be a violation of privilege. When at the next session Mr. Benton put his resolution that the Senate expunge its own act, the motion was tabled.

The Senator took no further action in the matter of expunging until the last session of Jackson's last term. But the point was being gained in the States. Expunging became a shibboleth to Jackson vindicators; old senators, when their term ran out were superseded by expungers, and others were instructed to vote to expunge,—such instruction from State legislatures then demanding obedience or resignation. On the third anniversary of the condemnatory resolution, Mr. Benton was ready to present again a motion similar to his original one—this time with confidence that the Senate would go with him. January 16, 1837, at midnight, after speeches against it by Calhoun, Clay and Webster, the vote was taken. Twenty-three senators now voted for it, twenty against it. Amid hisses and groans from the crowded galleries and lobbies of the Senate chamber, the secretary of the Senate did openly draw a square of broad black lines around the resolve and wrote across its face in strong letters these words: "Expunged by order of the Senate, this 16th day of January, 1837."

Jackson gave a grand dinner to the expungers. This victory was considered the achievement of his civil life as New Orleans had been of his military career. He was an honest believer in his own destiny. What he had relentlessly accomplished he took as blessings from the hand of Providence. Wonders were truly wrought for his thanksgiving; the rejected Van Buren was already elected to succeed him; now he saw the condemning Senate forced to retract; and soon he was to succeed in putting Taney on the chief judicial seat. Before retirement all his heart's wishes were fulfilled. The victory was complete

enough to extract devout ejaculations. His demonstrated invincibility was "a crowning mercy."

This is the story of the Senate's adventures with the Bank. In the House matters went quite otherwise, for there the adherents of the President were a united majority. The message of the President and the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, both defending the removal of the deposits, were followed by the appointment of a new committee to investigate the affairs of the Bank. The investigation resulted in two reports; that of the majority complained that the Bank had prevented a full investigation. Subsequently the House voted that the Bank ought not to be rechartered, and that the deposits ought not to be restored. It also declined to act upon the Senate's condemnatory resolutions. Thus the President's course received the support of the representative branch of Congress which invariably responded to his personal influence.

As has been said, the removal helped to precipitate a general financial crisis. The affairs of the Bank were in good shape when the deposits were stopped. But the institution was obliged to call in its loans, and the money world was in more or less confusion and distress. The local banks were not at the beginning strong enough to assume the responsibility thrust upon them. Petitions from the people were sent to Congress and delegations visited Jackson. In the general scramble towards readjustment there were panics and counter-panics, the bank scare and the bank mania.

The history of the war on the Bank is wearyingly long; Jackson's two administrations are bound up with it. It is also devious, yet it had one aim—extermination.

The end of the Bank is still another chapter. Before its national charter expired, in 1836, it got a State charter from Pennsylvania, corruptly, as it is alleged. People of that generation felt very generally that Jackson's charges against it were not proven, and their confidence in it continued after it became the United States Bank of Pennsylvania. But its new life was certainly unsound. It lasted for five years and then went to pieces ignominiously, having in the meantime failed twice. The stockholders lost all their capital, and Biddle was ruined. His former friends withdrew their trust from him and his later sensational methods of banking. The final break-up of the Bank has affected opinions concerning Jackson's course towards it. Its evil end has seemed to justify his harsh treatment of it. But it is equally possible that it was a healthy institution before he laid heavy hands upon it. After that it fought for existence, and, like a person, got into bad habits.

When the public debt was all paid, January 1, 1835, the great sources of revenue continued just the same to pour moneys into the Treasury. The duties on imports were still protective and heavy enough to make the general income greater than the outgo. Moreover, the sale of public lands had increased enormously, running up to millions a month. The United States government was the responsible custodian of this increasing surplus. It was now deposited in the many State banks instead of in the one national Bank, but there was general uneasiness and a desire to provide for this incubus which had come to take the place of public debt. The nation was very near to realizing Hamilton's maxim that a public debt is a public blessing. The responsibility for

the surplus was a question pressed upon Congress during Jackson's second term.

In 1833 the President had pocketed Mr. Clay's bill, which had become an act of Congress, to divide among the States the net proceeds of the sale of public lands. In his next message he gave his reasons for the practical veto; he found it bad policy to give away that part of the public income collected by land sales while continuing to add to the total income by imposts. But the scheme of distribution had become popular, especially among what were called the "improvement States," which because they were new were also doubtful in politics. It therefore became an opportune party measure for the new Whig party to take up. In the session of 1835-6 an act was passed by Congress which provided that all money in the Treasury January 1, 1837, in excess of five million dollars, should be deposited with the States in proportion of their membership in the electoral college. These deposits were to be made in four instalments, January, April, July and October, 1837. The States were to give in return negotiable certificates of deposit. Many who had opposed distribution in out-and-out gifts to the States fell in with this plan of simply depositing the same distribution, subject to recall.

But the President was very reluctant to sign any bill of the kind. He did, however, urged by the friends of Mr. Van Buren, whose election was just pending. Those Democrats who, without compromise, opposed the whole scheme of distribution as unconstitutional and as irrational financiering, considered that the Democratic calamities, which culminated in 1840, began with this act. Jackson's own criticism on the act in his message of 1836 was

comprehensive, and increases wonder that he had not used his veto privilege.

The payment of the public debt had of itself created a circle of money disturbance; then the removal of the deposits from the Bank of the United States had affected credit very generally, as has been indicated; now for a third time financial waters were troubled. The new enactment called in great sums of national capital, which as surplus had been deposited in the local or "pet banks" and by them loaned out to individuals, and redistributed these sums among the States according to this latest apportionment. It proved to be more than business could endure.

The nation's money was merely loaned to the States, but they went immediately to spend it, in most cases to squander it. Three instalments of the distribution were paid, but in the meantime the business crash of 1837, which this course had helped to produce, came, and the last instalment was never paid. The Treasury itself was soon in need of money, but Congress never dared to call upon the States to pay back what had been nominally deposited with them, not even during the Civil War, when the national needs were extremely pressing.

But before capital and credit began to be affected by these harsh acts, executive and legislative, they were both exceedingly easy. Even in the face of portents the prosperity of the country was seemingly unaffected. After it had been demonstrated that the big war debt could be easily paid off, the Old World began to feel unlimited confidence in the resources and riches of the New World, and became willing to send over money for almost any sort of enterprise. Thus money was plenty and credit large. All enter-

prises flourished, land grew in value, prices generally advanced, and the times were stimulating.

In the midst of all these influences, at the same time favourable and pernicious, it was natural that enterprise and credit should overreach themselves. Speculation spread like a fever; great debts followed; large blocks of capital became tied up in over-stimulated ventures, and their unremunerativeness caused a stringency in money.

Jackson had his remedy for the commercial excitement and uncertainty. He had had to meet endless complaints since he withdrew the nation's money from the Bank of the United States and scattered it over the country to be freely loaned out. In order to correct abuses of credit and to restore a sense of security, he desired to set up specie currency and to restrict bank-notes.

But the legislation promoted by administration bullionists to bring gold into circulation did not accomplish that result. Because of a new mint law silver dollars were at a premium. Consequently they were either melted up or exported; while the flood of bank paper kept out gold in its larger denominations. All specie disappeared in the panic of 1837.

In the summer of 1836, after the adjournment of Congress, the President, still pursuing his specie programme, instructed the Secretary of the Treasury to issue a circular ordering that all land offices should accept only gold or silver in payment for public lands. The lands were then being bought by speculators, and paid for in bank-notes which were not of specie value and were of very doubtful worth. The facts warranted any hindrance to schemes which swindled the government. But the sudden demand for specie in the West could not be met there. Its transportation

affected the East and all revenue banks, and was perhaps the last straw in the financial burden of inflated business which banks in general were carrying. When the payment of any set of debts was demanded in specie, loans and credit contracted with a snap. Enterprises and operations fell flat for lack of funds.

Jackson was blamed for issuing the "specie circular," as it was called; but it was in itself a righteous arrest, not timely only because too late and too violent. It also was a check inconsistent with his previous attitude. He had promoted deposit banks, and accommodation, and therefore virtually, speculation. Finding the thing he had made not good, he sought to destroy it off-hand, inconsiderate of a crash.

Jackson, early in his first term, had proceeded with his usual directness to push the claims of the United States against France—claims which had been unsettled since the spoliations of Napoleon's time. Louis Philippe getting the throne at this juncture, a treaty was the more readily arranged for satisfactorily squaring the old account. By it France was to pay twenty-five million francs and the United States one and a half million; these sums when passed were to settle all private claims against either country. Insistence was at this time very salutary, for the United States had previously suffered themselves to be the one neglected claimant; Jackson's course of downright demand raised respect abroad and won favour at home.

However, the French government did not appropriate funds to keep the promises of the treaty, and a bill drawn on that government by the American Treasury went to protest. In 1834, considering the slackness to have been tolerated long enough, Jackson, in his annual message, reviewed the treaty and

the bad faith of France. He suggested that a law should be passed authorizing reprisals on French property, if France continued indifferent to the terms of the treaty. Although the President disclaimed any "menace," this recommendation made a sensation in Paris. The French government held that it could not in honour comply with a threat. The Senate smoothed over matters by agreeing essentially with the President and at the same time rejecting his suggestion of reprisal. Mr. Adams, in the House, upheld Jackson's spirited policy and carried through a resolution which insisted upon the fulfilment of the treaty. The affair grew pretty serious. The French minister was recalled and Edward Livingston came home from Paris. The message of 1835 again reviewed the situation, but the understanding grew worse until when the year 1836 opened, diplomatic relations had been entirely broken off. Then, in a special message to Congress, Jackson renewed coercive recommendations; but they were the old Jeffersonian measures which in excluding the enemy's ships and products warred upon commerce only.

Through the services of England, which were disinterested and timely, the relations between the two countries, both undesirous of war, were rather unexpectedly disentangled. France found a reason for declaring the misunderstanding removed, and retreated gracefully. The King ordered the account to be settled down to date, March, 1836, by the payment of four instalments of the debt at one time. Whether Jackson's diplomacy was well considered or not, it secured an important foreign triumph and set a good precedent of firmness in relations with Europe.

During Jackson's second term there were the be-

ginnings of events and movements which a few years later were to come to great significance; and of course Jackson had something to do with them. The Mexican State of Texas, largely colonized by Americans, had declared itself independent of Mexico and was looking forward to annexation to the United States. Such a transfer, even after its independence had been secured by arms, in several bloody battles by General Sam Houston and his Texan rangers, was naturally not a possibility which Mexico could tolerate; and to make it still more infuriating to Mexico, Texas was claiming boundaries which tripled the original territory known as the State of Texas. The government of the United States saw the opportunity of another immense enlargement of territory, and hoped also to gain the California coast with the harbour of San Francisco, all of which belonged to Mexico. Accordingly there began a system of intrigues and bullying, the like of which the United States was never guilty of before nor since. At one time Jackson found a pretext in an Indian outbreak for ordering United States troops into Mexican territory; and the commanding general hoped to be able to copy his chief's own early recklessness when he chased the Seminoles into Spanish Florida; but the indignant and decisive protest of Mexico caused the recall of the troops, and so the conflict was postponed.

This Texas intrigue did much to arouse anti-slavery sentiment in the North. The South had not concealed her purpose to obtain new territory for the sake of slavery. The free territory of the North already reached the Rocky Mountains, and was likely to stretch through Oregon to the Pacific; but the slave States were barred from western expansion by

the great bulk of Mexico, and consequently they conceived their destiny, as slave States, to demand the absorption of that territory through to the Pacific.

All this made happy fuel for the anti-slavery agitators, whom the recent emancipation in the British West Indies had started into new business. The anti-slavery sentiment had been quite silent since the Missouri compromise of 1820; but now that England had freed her slaves and that the South was plotting for more slave lands, abolitionism began in earnest. The more it was frowned upon by both the great national parties and by the conservative element generally, the more vehement it grew. Its meetings multiplied, and it sent both missionaries and tracts to the South. The missionaries were easily lynched, but the tracts which went through the United States mail presented a graver problem. The slave-holders protested against the mail being used as the carrier of these incendiary doctrines, and Jackson's Postmaster-general, while he could not exclude them from the mails, publicly condoned the individual action of Southern postmasters in refusing to deliver them.

Jackson's last years in the presidency were a seething time in social and political conditions. The superabundant energy of the young nation, suddenly coming to a better knowledge of itself through more facile communication, found singular vent in physical violence, mobs, assassinations, and duels. Hobbies of reform were evolved, and enlisted large numbers of willing enthusiasts. Native Americanism, anti-Romanism, anti-monopoly, anti-capital, anti-rum, as well as anti-masonry and anti-slavery, were all lifting their heads at this extraordinary period, and each

hoped to gain its end by legislating its views upon the nation.

Above public questions and reforms the President was most concerned in choosing his successor. Precedent and his own increasing bodily infirmities forbade a third term, but he craved the personal gratification of putting the crown on his favourite. The machinery of the Democratic party had become perfectly geared, and national patronage oiled every part. Few hitches were to be expected, and yet a most serious one occurred in Jackson's own State. Early in the canvass the Tennessee legislature dared to express an undercurrent of rebellion against the President's choice, Mr. Van Buren, by presenting its own candidate, Judge Hugh L. White, a Democrat, a Tennessee senator, and an old friend of Jackson. The latter indignantly resented this action, and called his friend a "traitor," whereupon the *Globe* shamefully attacked Judge White. This was the same legislature that had nominated Jackson in 1825, before Adams had met his first Congress; then it had expressed "the People's will," now it was an irregular and treacherous body; this was Jackson's mode of logic.

The administration lost no time in hurrying on a national convention whose candidate should be "fresh from the people," as the President put it. Such a convention met in Baltimore in May, 1835. This meeting was esteemed by many no higher than a caucus, managed by the President and given a new name. The convention adopted a rule "that a majority of two-thirds shall be required to elect the candidates for president and vice-president." This rule was then desired simply because so handsome a majority for any candidate would produce "a more

imposing effect." This proved quite unnecessary in Mr. Van Buren's case, since his nomination was unanimous. Colonel Richard M. Johnson was the nominee for Vice-President. This was the "Van Buren Convention," as the opposition contemptuously called it.

The opposition forces in 1836 were still more various than in 1832. A large division had become known by a new name. The first mention of Whigs is in Niles's Register, April, 1834, the opposition being then so called in Connecticut and New York. This name was assumed to point, by way of contrast, the toryism of high prerogative which the party opposed in Jackson. During the next administration, when the name Whig had become comprehensive of almost every shade of opposition, including National Republicans, Horace Greeley's "Whig Almanac" gave the party's component parts as: "(1) Most of those who, under the name of National Republicans, had previously been known as supporters of Adams and Clay, and advocates of the American system; (2) Most of those who, acting in defence of what they deemed the assailed or threatened rights of the States, had been stigmatized as nullifiers, or the less virulent States' rights men, who were thrown into a position of armed neutrality towards the administration by the doctrines of the proclamation of 1832 against South Carolina; (3) A majority of those before known as Anti-Masons; (4) Many who had up to that time been known as Jackson men, but who united in condemning the high-handed conduct of the Executive, the immolation of Duane, and the subserviency of Taney; (5) Numbers who had not before taken any part in politics, but were now awakened from their apathy by the palpable usurpa-

tions of the Executive, and the imminent peril of our whole fabric of constitutional liberty and national prosperity."

To unite these inchoate factions was beyond the possible at this election. In fact, the most helpful plan for defeating Jacksonianism seemed to lie in disunion. Several candidates, locally strong, might prevent a majority and throw the election again into the House. This would give a chance for combinations not predictable but possessing many possibilities. So quite naturally the opposition did not meet in national convention; State conventions and legislatures made the several nominations. In Pennsylvania the Anti-Masons nominated General William Henry Harrison The legislature of Ohio presented the name of Judge John McLean. Daniel Webster was nominated by the Whigs of Massachusetts. Judge White was already in the field as an independent Democrat. Thus the battle began between the administration candidate and four opponents all of whom contended only to defeat him. The strength of the hand that upheld Van Buren is shown in the result of the desperate struggle. The regular Democratic ticket won; but the diminished majority had an ill look for the future surety of Jackson's party. The number of States that took part in the election of 1836 was exactly double the original thirteen. The popular vote for Van Buren was 762,978; for all others 736,250. In the electoral college Van Buren received 170 votes, a majority over all of 46, as against Jackson's majority of 152 four years before. No candidate for Vice-President received a majority of votes. Of the two candidates before the Senate Richard M. Johnson was chosen.

Martin Van Buren came into a difficult inheritance

and at a most unhappy business crisis. He had reverently announced in his letter accepting the nomination that he should endeavour to tread generally in the footsteps of President Jackson. William Allen Butler comments upon this ambition of his father's friend thus: "The predecessor had been too illustrious, and his footsteps had so shaken the whole social system that a great shock was inevitable." Von Holst remarks that "The heir of Jackson's supremacy was not a man, but the great crowd." Concerning the man who was departing he declares that "since Louis XIV. the maxim *l'etat c'est moi*, has scarcely found a second time so ingenuous and complete an expression as in Andrew Jackson."

The estimates of President Jackson's character and of his civil service to his country are various and opposing; but no one denies that he went out of the presidential office on March 4, 1837, the most widely popular and beloved man who ever retired from it. His fervid admirer, Senator Thomas H. Benton, has described the last scene of his Washington life—the inauguration of his successor, Mr. Van Buren—with a wealth of rhetoric. The retiring President was the patron of that occasion, and he regarded it as the acme of his own triumph. He wrote in anticipation of "the glorious scene of Mr. Van Buren, once rejected by the Senate, sworn into office by Chief Justice Taney, also being rejected by the factious Senate." Benton asserts, probably justly, that the acclamations on that day were for the man who went out. "For once the rising was eclipsed by the setting sun."

It is worthy of note that the ex-President left the capital in a railway car. The eight years since he came to his first inauguration up rivers and by stage

across country, had been marked by the building of railways and of more canals.

Jackson had not been in health for a number of years, and those which followed were, to a degree, distressful. Yet it is affirmed by his intimates that his serenity and patience were marvellous exhibitions. The irascible temper gained placid waters, and there were no more outbreaks. Reverence and piety were not foreign to his nature, and now in mellow age he took up the religious duties which his wife's example urged upon his conscience. In joining the church he even forgave all his enemies. He at first made those who had aspersed his military services to his country the exception to this amnesty, but upon the exhortation of his minister he made it inclusive. But in spite of this catholicity the fancy has to be forced to imagine the stern old man coming to particulars and either admitting an error or shaking hands with the shades of his enemies.

In his reminiscences Benton tells a story of his hero, dramatic and simple. He recounts: "I arrived at his house one wet chilly evening in February, and came upon him in the twilight, sitting alone before the fire, a lamb and a child between his knees. He started a little, called a servant to remove the two innocents to another room and explained to me how it was. The child had cried because the lamb was out in the cold, and begged him to bring it in—which he had done to please the child, his adopted son, then not two years old." The eulogist adds: "The ferocious man does not do that! and though Jackson had his passions and his violence, they were for men and enemies—those who stood up against him—and not for women and children, or the weak

and helpless; for all of whom his feelings were those of protection and support."

The Hermitage was the home which Jackson had acquired for himself early in the century, before he made a business of war or politics. It was a superb estate of some thousand acres, twelve miles out from Nashville. Here he had been a successful farmer, stock-breeder, planter, and slave-holder. Here he and Mrs. Jackson had shown large-hearted hospitality. And here the old general died June 8, 1845, idolized by relatives, slaves, and near friends, and by the larger part of his countrymen. He lived to see his party again victorious, with Polk in office and Clay again defeated. He saw the "monster"—the Bank of the United States—and its hated president ruined and dead. He saw the complete discomfiture of Calhoun. He had sown whirlwinds and he reaped peace.

We have here sketched the President who held the greatest personal power of any American. His faults and virtues were part and parcel of an individuality which, applied to government, became absolute. To one who studies the time impartially, this impress must appear to have been a national misfortune. The force itself was unsubduable, a product of nature.

PRESIDENT MARTIN VAN BUREN.

(ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1837-1841.)

CHAPTER XVI.

A CONSUMMATE POLITICIAN.

THE character so long dominant had retired. The great personality whose large lines the people loved had left a huge gap in Washington life. Who and what was the man stepping in complacently to fill it? Statesmen of the old sort were no longer popular for the chief office. The people had once tasted the exhilarating cup of their own apparent choice, and they liked it. But they had not been permitted a second lawless choice, for the first one proved to be their dictator, and had laid his hand upon the future, marking the sort of man to come after him.

Andrew Jackson, President, explains Martin Van Buren, President, dissimilar as the men were. The explosive directness of one had been fitted by the pliableness of the other. But in many instances the strong man had shouted to the world what the man of gentle manners had whispered to him. At all events, the two were attuned. Nor does it seem wholly fair to set down this adjustment as against the political legatee. Personal attraction and working

adaptability figure in politics as legitimately as elsewhere.

The ambition which the new President expressed to tread generally in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor, was an honest not a weak avowal. It showed the company he had kept and it expressed the long modulation of his nature to the vehement autocracy of Jackson. But it did not necessarily announce slavish imitation or individual purposelessness. It is clear that the word "generally" in the above oft-quoted programme which he publicly laid out for himself was significant, and in the light of his administrative course it can be given a broad interpretation. He believed in Jeffersonian Democracy, pure and simple, and in Jackson as its latest expression, but he did not fail to indicate, though ever so unobtrusively, his own purpose now that he stood in front to go forward with events in a path of his own.

Van Buren has been called many names, not exactly hard names, but insinuatingly destructive of the respect which his presidency would naturally command. That each imputation corresponded to something in the unusual blend of his nature can scarcely be doubted,—so just is even unjust criticism. But this self-made, self-poised man who, it is grudgingly admitted by detractors, almost attained statesmanship, ought not to be studied only to find out how much of a wrong-hearted politician he was. Since age, responsibility, and experience developed increasing strength in him, strong merits may reasonably be suspected underneath a personality which was not nobly impressive.

The charges against Van Buren as a man are numerous; that with him principle never stood in the

way of advancement; that he was shrewd enough to stop at a misdeed, for he knew it would be a mistake; that he could even play the part of a man of principle; that he caught every wind that blew; that he never cared for an idea but solely for himself; that he was a characterless trader in politics; that even his best considered political ideas had no moral force to him. "Non-committal" has also been a favorite characterization which told in a word how far he came short of being a statesman.

Naturally each of these charges has been denied by his friends. Some historians have declared that they were not substantiated by a careful scrutiny of his whole life. Other writers have separated his career into two parts—the first that of a party manager subservient for his own ends to Jackson; the latter that of a dignified president handling his business ably and with courage.

No friend has presented a more reassuring picture of the whole man than Mr. William Allen Butler, the son of Van Buren's Attorney-general. As a tribute of friendship it casts out all these allegations and insists that the man who stood the trial of popular election for governor of New York, for vice-president, and for president, who stood the test of great rivals and who triumphed in the inauguration of a successful policy, was a great American, whether called a politician or a statesman.

The personal dissimilarities between the incoming and the retiring Democrats were certain to produce marked outward effects in the new administration. Van Buren was a gentleman, and he liked men about him who were gentle also. It has been a question from whence he got his marked polish of manner. His native Kinderhook did not similarly endow all

her sons, neither did Dutch ancestry. In that sense his manner of the world was not natural, although it seemed perfectly so; it was something never put off, consequently not put on. Mr. Butler sees this outward decorum as the manifestation of inward calm: "It seemed to any one who studied this phase of his character as if, in some early moment of destiny, his whole nature had been bathed in a cool, clear, and unruffled depth, from which it drew this lifelong serenity and self-control."

Others, among them John Quincy Adams, saw in Van Buren's urbanity signs of an early and sinister influence, that of Aaron Burr. But that would not be a damning, if a likely, explanation; for it is a tribute to that remarkably mannered Vice-President that he could return from the shedding of Hamilton's blood to preside over the Senate at the trial of a Justice of the Supreme Court, and win reluctant admiration from that body for his dignified and distinguished ruling. The fact that Van Buren was likewise notably imperturable, well-bred and self-respecting gives no token of an immoral nature to match Burr's. Unlike Jackson, Van Buren avoided personal collisions. He loved peace and order. He liked to be on good terms personally with political enemies. He was even provokingly good-natured. He has been called thick-skinned and tough.

Unlike in manner and in disposition, these two men were also strikingly dissimilar in personal appearance—Jackson rugged, Van Buren almost sleek. Von Holst has drawn them in strong colours; Jackson is not flattered but the treatment is respectful, while Van Buren is almost caricatured by cunning words. Yet each portrayal gives us a recognizable and comparable likeness. He describes them thus:

"Jackson, a man with a tall, lean form, erect and straight; his fleshless hand firmly grasping the knob of his walking stick, without the aid of which his stiffened legs and swollen feet refused to move with their wonted certainty; every wrinkle of his long, sharply-cut face carved, as it were, in granite; his large eyes behind his bushy eyebrows beaming with undiminishable brightness in spite of his spectacles; his white but still plentiful hair bristling up from his perpendicular forehead. Van Buren, on the other hand, reaching only precisely the middle height; in blameless toilette, his smooth, snow-white shirt-bosom in complete harmony with his round face, carefully shaved, with the exception of very decent side-whiskers; his large double chin finding a pleasant support on his broad black cravat, the only characteristic folds proceeding from his fleshy under lip; a settled smile in which a studied, obliging manner, native good nature and shrewdness have equal shares; in his bright-coloured, vivacious, twinkling eyes the same qualities to be read; a round high forehead, which appears higher still from the absence of hair on the crown, and bears evidence of endowments without, however, wearing the stamp of the thinker; a friendly, well-meaning bourgeois, in whom the largest and best part of simplicity and honesty are scarcely more than skin deep, in opposition to which the diplomatic reserve is more than a thin varnish, labouriously acquired by the parvenu. His wide mouth is certainly able in speech, but it is still better skilled in the art of silence conscious of its object. The man understands how to wait without manifesting the least sign of impatience; but he will never walk away from a mark which he has once aimed at, and he thinks

himself good enough for the best." This is the "Little Van" of his enemies.

The eighth president was a New Yorker—born in Kinderhook, Columbia county, east of the Hudson, not far from the old town of Albany. In this same Dutch village among the hills he breathed his last, eighty years later. He was the first president not born a British subject. Born Dec. 5, 1782, at the closing of the Revolutionary War, he lived to see the Civil War. He was one of the few distinguished Americans who might have known Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. He belonged to both centuries, and yet he was the first president who had no part, not even a boy's, in the Revolution. The other presidents had been Virginians, or New Englanders, or from beyond the Alleghanies. The State of New York, large, populous, rich, noisy in politics, had had always to give its preponderating electoral vote to a man from other settlements. It was no more than fair that the eighth choice, which was really the thirteenth bout at popular election, should fall on a New Yorker of Dutch descent.

Young Martin Van Buren had a farmer father, a tavern-keeper also, Abraham Van Buren. His mother, whose maiden name was Hoes and who was also of Dutch ancestry, was more intelligent than ordinarily were busy farmers' wives of that day. She liked to talk politics, and gave an early direction to her boy's mind, which rustic tavern life further shaped. Besides this effective education at home, he went to the district school and thence to one of the pretentious academies of that day. But when he was fourteen years old play and schoolbooks were dropped, and he began a man's career as an apprentice in a Kinderhook law office. That was a seven years'

drill in those days, not severe but practical and adequate. In Van Buren's case it was topped by a last year in the office of Van Ness in the city of New York. Thus equipped, he began practice for himself in his native village. He soon grew to have a practice throughout Columbia county, and in time moved to Hudson, its county seat.

He showed at the beginning of his profession that he thought himself good enough for the best by training to meet at the bar the first lawyer in that part of the State. Elisha Williams was unsurpassed as an advocate; he was, moreover, a Federalist in a county of influential Federalists. It is evident that the youngster from the Democratic-Republican minority who dared to contend against this professional giant made a brave as well as an ambitious beginning. But Van Buren was not too daring. He soon began to win cases in the Supreme Court, where his orderly and combining mind was more than a match for Williams' brilliancy. The older lawyer at last confessed the rivalry, saying, "I get all the verdicts, you get all the judgments." This early contest was significant. It measured the judgment, the perspicacity, and the skill of the growing lawyer, and it foretold his leadership in politics, whither his attention had turned as a matter of course.

In fact, Van Buren entered politics with the Democratic-Republican victory of 1800. Though but a boy of eighteen, he did enthusiastic electioneering for the first Democratic-Republican president; and for that faith and his own advancement through the party, he began to work systematically as soon as he settled to law practice. Law and politics were natural to him. If he was diligent at one, he was even more indefatigable in following up every line of political

influence which diverged then, as now, from village and county centres. The State and national prestige which Van Buren enjoyed before he was forty years old was gained by a patient climb from the lowest rung, and there was no misstep.

When in 1803 Van Buren, twenty-one years of age, looked out upon the political field of his State the "spoils system" was already operative. 1801 had brought in a Republican governor, George Clinton, and also a new constitutional committee, called the council of appointment. Through that council nearly every appointment in the State was made, from 1801 until the new constitution of 1821. It consisted of the governor and of four senators chosen by the assembly. Consequently it changed with the political complexion of the assembly; also its consultations were secret and responsibility was divided. Here was the real machine; and the victorious Republicans first used it in 1801 to drive out the Federalists.

But very soon the Republican party itself began to be unmanageable, on account of its great names and families. There were the Clintons and Livingstons and Aaron Burr, all too independently strong and ambitious for cohesion in home politics. The Federalists in the State were still organized and able to carry the balance of power over to one faction or the other after this disintegration began. At first the Clintons and Livingstons were united, and defeated Burr for governor. Van Buren was with them. But these allies soon quarrelled over offices, and henceforth Clintonians and Livingstonians, or Lewisites, see-sawed for supremacy in the governorship, in the assembly, and in the council. Every year might see the appointing council changed, and that meant general proscription. Even the Federalists came

again into power through the assembly, and thus added to the scrimmage. No one complained at being ousted, but every one worked his way back to office through party success.

Young Van Buren was an apt novitiate at this new whirligig of preferment, and, clinging to the older Clintonian party, he got his first reward for service when in 1808 he was made surrogate of Columbia county. He was then twenty-four and had been recently married to a kinswoman, Hannah Hoes. His family life was a happy and prosperous one for twelve years. Then his wife died, leaving four sons. He remained devoted to her memory, a widower until the day of his death, forty-three years later.

In the course of ins and outs Van Buren lost his county office, but soon afterwards he was elected to the State senate. He was the candidate of the Clinton faction and ran against Livingston, the candidate of Livingstonians, Federalists, and Burrites, so that his election was a marked distinction. He quickly made that advanced position a centre for enlarged and independent action. He was untiring in increasing his acquaintance and in multiplying connections.

In the inglorious campaign of 1812 he made his first essay at national politics. He conducted the canvass in behalf of DeWitt Clinton, by which the Democratic-Republican party of New York sought, for local reasons, to defeat Madison by coalescing with the Federalists. Clinton stood for peace since the administration had declared for war. As the candidate of all who were dissatisfied, he secured a larger electoral vote than was anticipated, yet he never recovered from the stigma of the coalition. Nationally, Clinton's political prospects were over. But his manager escaped serious consequences by getting back

quickly into the regular fold. The "boss" and the new senator worked no more together.

Van Buren, however, was then strong enough to stand alone, the centre of a new coterie in opposition to the Clintonians. The impression made by this consummate politician of thirty is not wholly pleasant; he appears too calculating, too much on the make politically; there is the feeling that he was not great enough to commit huge mistakes and too gifted to blunder. The line of his ambition is too obvious. Pursuing a straight purpose of his own, he now supported Governor Tompkins and a strong war policy. He led the senate in all war measures, and presently the end of the war and the jubilation over the battle of New Orleans left in high favour those who had stood by the administration through its ordeal. Van Buren, the lucky, did not fail to get another slice of the political pie. For his timely lead in the senate he was appointed to the office of attorney-general of New York. This he kept for four years, until the Clinton party took it from him. He remained in the Senate in the meantime, and was reëlected for a second term.

When the bill authorizing the construction of the Erie Canal was before the legislature in 1817, Van Buren very handsomely forgot political feud and voted for Clinton's project. Never failing to do a gracious act graciously, he declared that it would be "the most important vote" he ever gave in his life. But when Clinton, on a wave of popularity consequent upon the success of his splendid scheme, was almost unanimously elected governor, his enemies within the party, Van Buren with the others, suffered a thorough defeat. They were called "Bucktails," a name given originally to the members of the Tam-

many Society, but now applied to the whole faction of anti-Clintonians. Although Clinton lost his governorship but once from this time on until his death in 1828, the Bucktails won their United States senator in 1821—and he was Martin Van Buren.

Van Buren was a very important man before entering national politics. His influence had become dominant over a great portion of his party. He and a few able followers already formed a clique at Albany, then or a little later called the Albany Regency. They controlled *The Argus*, and what it declared on any political question was becoming more and more mandatory. In 1823 Van Buren wrote in a letter: "Without a paper thus edited at Albany, we may hang our harps on the willows. With it, the party can survive a thousand such convulsions as those which now agitate and probably alarm most of those around you." With a trained eye on the political field and a skilled hand at the machinery, he was in a sense the first New Yorker before he went beyond the State. Clinton and Tompkins had each been side-tracked at various times,—Van Buren had steadily progressed; even in defeat his party influence had never diminished.

A year or two before his own election Van Buren had been able to gratify his sense of fitness and at the same time disappoint a Clintonian candidate by successfully aiding the return of Rufus King to the Federal Senate. Moreover, such a service likely drew to himself the unattached and high-minded Federalists, as they were called, whom King represented. This is one of the Van Buren acts which has been much explained and denounced by those friendly and hostile to him. If it cannot be looked at as a piece of pure independence and patriotism, there are two other acts antedating his entrance into Congress

which were positive and above the politician. He helped to voice the sentiment of New York by voting in 1820 in the State senate for an instruction to the senators and representatives in Congress "to oppose the admission, as a state in the Union, of any territory not comprised within the original boundary of the United States, without making the prohibition of slavery therein an indispensable condition of admission." He also gave at the State constitutional convention in 1821, a clear exposition of his views on universal suffrage. He believed that the advance from a freeholder's government to pure democracy ought to be made carefully. He was not afraid of universal suffrage, and yet he was opposed to the sudden removal of all qualifications. Against general sentiment he held that the black free-holder ought to have a vote.

From this rather discursive account of President Van Buren's early manhood in the heavy political atmosphere of the State of New York, a few things are plain: He was reared politically in a hot-bed of party strife and internal rivalries; he got on in it marvellously well; he became by intuition, environment and training a manoeuvering politician, but when occasion demanded a statesman, he showed already good promise.

Van Buren's senatorial career has little special interest. The first four years concluded Monroe's "era of good feeling"; the questions up were few and unimportant, while the leaders contended merely for the succession. The New York senator very wisely looked on. It is perfectly certain that he saw many things more clearly than the hot contestants, but in some particulars he had to learn the business. This he was content to do, bearing himself modestly

towards opponents and elders, and circumspectly towards all with whom his personal relations had yet to be established. The man who had passed through the maelstrom of New York was not likely to steer wrong now.

Yet on some of the questions which were beginning to divide in two the old Republican party, Van Buren was not settled. He did not at first see the alleged danger of letting the government busy itself with internal improvements, and he voted for the tariff of 1824, which increased protection. Also, in regard to the candidates in 1824, he mistook indications. He thought the man that could control the "caucus" would have all the advantages of party regularity and would win. It proved to be quite otherwise, but he still continued to support Crawford throughout the campaign. For Jackson he saw not the ghost of a chance. After the fight was all over he took a fresh survey; he then saw that the caucus would never be used again and that the masses must be worked directly; he realized that the nomination of Jackson, though irregular, had touched them and that they were disappointed when he was not elected.

From being indifferently favourable to Adams, after Crawford, Van Buren soon drew off. This was the time when Jackson's personality and his newly evinced power over the people, backed by the concerted action of his agents, began to call men out for or against him. There was no mistaking the snap of his opposition to Adams and Clay. War was declared, and many less astute than Van Buren soon saw who was bound to gain the day. As Van Buren was not previously committed either to ironclad principles on any national question, or to any one man, since Crawford's failure, his decision to join the Jack-

son men was not unnatural. It was surely reached with deliberation, for it is impossible to fancy him taking any important step impulsively. Probably his reason for it was compounded of political foresight, of a residuum of preference for the older Democratic doctrines which certainly Adams did not express, and possibly of a personal admiration for General Jackson, whose acquaintance he had made in the Senate.

The man who could control New York State had to be taken into serious account, and it has not failed to be asserted that Van Buren held off for some time, till Jackson came to fair terms. This is a supposition which the later announced programme, that Van Buren would be in Jackson's cabinet as Secretary of State and succeed him at the end of four years, does not necessarily sustain. Yet such a mutual understanding, which it is also said included Van Buren's promise to support the Southern policy in relation to domestic manufactures and internal improvements, was in accord with the politics of that day, perhaps of any day.

Acting upon this recent preference for the general, Van Buren began to lead definitely the opposition in the Senate, and the formation of the modern Democratic party. However, he was not one of the Jackson men who voted against Clay's confirmation as Secretary of State, and he always treated the administration with courtesy. He drilled his minority with tact and firmness until it became a united body which in the XXth Congress drew to itself enough doubtful members to make a majority. This opposition had gradually set itself against whatever the administration advocated, reacting against all that the "American System" and loose construction stood for. Neither Clay nor Webster were in the Senate with

Van Buren. Webster was in the Lower House, Clay either there or in the cabinet.

Governor DeWitt Clinton, so long the central figure in New York politics, died early in 1828. The Bucktails then nominated Van Buren for Governor of New York, and in the autumn he stood the test of a popular election along with Jackson. He did not get a majority vote, but had a creditable plurality. He was inaugurated January 1, 1829, and resigned his seat in the Senate. His governorship he resigned in the following March to take the place in Jackson's cabinet which had been generally allotted to him a long time before. This seems a curious play with high places. It is not plain to ordinary understanding why so much getting and renouncing was even advantageous to him, and it can scarcely be viewed as edifying to his constituents. It must be remembered, however, that Jackson's election was not sure when Van Buren ran for governor, and also that then, more than now, the sanction of a popular State vote gave great prestige to any aspirant. At all events, the highly strategic moves were successful, and no one seemed to be surprised at the climax.

Van Buren spent two years in Jackson's cabinet, and then, by his famously diplomatic resignation, cleared the place of Calhoun's friends and at the same time rendered himself eligible for the vice-presidency. He had become convinced during that time that nothing short of Jackson's popularity would carry the next election against Calhoun, Clay and Webster, so with patience he put off for four years more his own hopes. During his administration of foreign affairs, trade with the West Indies was reopened. This was very beneficent to commerce. But the method used by the Secretary of State was

such as had never been used before and never will be again. He instructed Minister McLane to represent to the Foreign Office at London that on this question the American government had been wrong in the past, that is, the previous administration had been, but that the party then in power repudiated the demands of its predecessors. These instructions were followed and brought about the desired result. But they were wholly beyond traditional and dignified diplomacy. Moreover, they kindled great ire in the Senate against the administration—an indignation which presently descended upon the one who in the business had put a slight upon his country.

In the summer following his resignation, Van Buren was appointed minister to England. He was happy to quit the thick air of strife which always surrounded Jackson, and he hoped, as avowed candidate for the presidency, to lose nothing by the absence. He arrived in London in September. There he remained for five months, fulfilling the pleasant duties of the mission, with Washington Irving as secretary of legation. Then came the shocking news that his appointment, made in recess, had been refused confirmation by the Senate. There could have been no more humiliating blow for the man whose existence had previously seemed so charmed that it could not be hit. He could not ignore this blow, but he bore it unshrinkingly and appeared uninterruptedly in London society until he had his audience of leave.

Van Buren had exposed himself to this retribution from the Senate, but it was extremely harsh. It was also a political blunder on the part of those who wished Van Buren's ruin. Back of the appointment was Jackson's temper, which was sure to get even for the affront. Moreover, a widespread popular sym-

pathy was awakened for the humiliated minister, which meant votes in the future. Benton, with foresight, declared immediately after the vote of rejection was taken: "You have broken a minister and elected a vice-president." He also wrote: "Rejection was a bitter medicine, but there was health at the bottom of the draught." Calhoun, on the other hand, declared to a friend: "It will kill him, sir, kill him dead. He will never kick, sir, never kick." After a few months of travel on the continent, Van Buren returned to New York, to find himself already nominated for the vice-presidency.

The vice-presidency was a kind of seclusion for Van Buren, from which he saw things coming his way. All the hubbub over nullification left him eminent with Jackson, for the nullifiers were that portion of the Democratic party hostile to him. As president of the Senate he had occasionally, by Calhoun's calculation, to show his colours in a deciding vote, as for instance when he said Aye to the bill relating to seditious publications, and thus revealed his attitude towards the slavery question.

One of the funny episodes in Congress which have become historic was the Vice-President's reception of a Clay apostrophe. The facts of the story, as told by Benton, run in the broad lines of caricature and illustrate aptly the characteristics of the two men. Webster had presented a petition setting forth the popular distress occasioned by the removal of the deposit funds, and followed it with a calamity speech. When Clay seconded Webster's motion to refer and print the memorial, he was carried away by the luxury of emotion and in one of the sky-flights of oratory highly considered in those days, he took the risk of apostrophizing the balanced man of the world who sat in the

chair. His rhetoric swept up against Van Buren in waves, as he asked the Vice-President to repair to the Executive Mansion, and placing before the Chief Magistrate the naked and undisguised truth, prevail upon him to retrace his steps.

"Go to him," he cried, "and tell him without exaggeration, but in the language of sincerity and truth, the actual condition of his bleeding country. . . . . Tell him of the tears of helpless widows, no longer able to earn their bread, and of unclad and unfed orphans who have been driven by his policy out of the busy pursuits in which but yesterday they were gaining an honest livelihood."

During this personal address Van Buren's innocent countenance expressed respectful attention, as if he were treasuring up every word for effective rehearsal to the President. When it was ended he called a senator to the chair, went to the eloquent speaker, asked him for a pinch of his fine maccaboy snuff (as he often did), received it and walked away. It is difficult to imagine how Clay could have forgotten the peril of exposing the passion of his oratory to the merciless turn that might have been expected from the Vice-President's *sang froid;* and it is as hard to fancy a more amiable bit of mockery than Van Buren used to make bathos of the tearful harangue.

Van Buren was unanimously nominated for president by the Democratic national convention in May, 1835, nearly a year and a half before the election. Party machinery controlled the convention, and Jackson governed the party machinery. But once the nomination was made, the people fought out the battle under the Jackson banner. It cannot be affirmed that they knew their man in any vital way. The masses do not naturally love an astute politician,

but in this case they obeyed the word of the man they did love.

This convention adopted no platform, but the circular letter of Sherrod Williams sent to Van Buren, Harrison, and White, in April, 1836, asking for their views on five questions in politics, brought before the people their personal position on these points. Van Buren did not reply until August, giving then positive answers to the category. He stated it to be his belief that Congress did not possess the power under the Constitution to raise money for distribution among the States; that also he did not approve of a distribution of the proceeds of the sales of public lands; that he did not approve appropriations to improve navigable streams above ports of entry; that he should interpret his own election as the will of the people that there should not be any Bank of the United States. To the last interrogation, Did he believe it constitutional to expunge from the records of a House of Congress any of its proceedings? he answered that it was not a concern of the President, but he stated that he considered the passage of Senator Benton's expunging resolution as an "act of justice."

These were unequivocal answers, and they placed before the voters that autumn a fair idea of what they were endorsing when they voted for Jackson's heir. On another question of most grave importance he spoke out also. It came in a direct form from North Carolina: What he thought of the powers of Congress in relation to slavery in the District of Columbia. This subject had been agitated for a half dozen years, but it had not disquieted the South for more than half that time. Now, for the first time, a candidate for the presidency was asked to define his attitude, and that candidate a Northern man. Mr. Van Buren met

the issue squarely. Whatever is thought of his sentiments,—and they showed no enlightenment of his human sense—his answer did credit to what may be called his intellectual conscience. In his discrimination he was too candid for a politician, and he gained by his honesty more opprobrium than if he, like others, had confused legality with expediency. He answered, in a word, that he could not conscientiously say that Congress did not have the power of interfering with or abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, but he could say that he would "go into the presidential chair the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of any attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slave-holding States." The coolness and candour of his judgment on the constitutional point emphasized his devotion to Southern wishes. It must be remembered, however, that John Quincy Adams repeatedly expressed himself as adverse, for reasons of expediency, to the abolition of slavery in the District; yet he was an anti-slavery leader. Van Buren had no sympathy, however, with the abolition sentiment, and his expediency was very close to subserviency; therefore he was doomed to be ranked with "Northern men with Southern principles."

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM POLITICS TO STATESMANSHIP.

The inauguration of Martin Van Buren was a happy spectacle for the old party that had not had its way thwarted since the century began. The two men who rode, side by side, to the Capitol, in a phaeton made from the timber of the old frigate *Constitution* and given to Jackson by the Democrats of New York City, were in the relation of father and son. Jackson's pleasure in the occasion was more evident than that of his self-contained companion; but both were gratified, and the sun shone upon their triumph. Van Buren begged the retiring President to continue to occupy the White House until his final departure from Washington, and when that day came the two again drove together to the terminus of the railroad in Van Buren's carriage.

The inaugural address of the incoming President had again positively declared his determined opposition to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia against the wishes of the slave-holding States, and to "the slightest interference with it in the States where it exists." This was the first time that the subject of slavery had been touched in an inaugural.

Jackson, retiring to the peace of The Hermitage, followed by a personal devotion that nothing could disturb, was more to be envied than his successor put into a holding which was speedily to become crowded with difficulties. For within two months after the

new occupation came the severest financial upheaval of the century. There had been numerous mutterings during Jackson's last year, but they had not been heeded as a warning of worse days to come. For three years, indeed, the country had shown symptoms of distress; but these had been spasmodic and some governmental remedy had been administered each time. When the final calamity came all could see that every remedial act had made the disease worse. About the disease itself there was much heated dispute then, and it has continued to be explained variously. There was financial disorder—was it caused solely by Jackson's war on the Bank or was it the result of concurrent causes?

Webster and Clay said then that Jackson caused it all, and many still affirm the same. It is a great deal to attribute to one arbitrary act a widespread catastrophe in which so many events met. It is safe to say that speculation and inflation were the immediate causes of the panic. Thus, in answering, What brought on the speculation fever?—general forces wholly outside of government, together with several legislative acts, take their place with Jackson's arbitrariness in the long reckoning.

The back-set had been gathering for many years, dating from the new prosperity which began in 1821. The rich harvests, the multiplying population, the magical new towns, the easy conquest of the western lands, and the rapid paying off of the national debt, all produced an exuberance of national spirit which was the antipode of the temper of the first settlers. Everything was got more easily than at the beginning. Moreover, England and all Europe again grew interested in the land of promise. They gave credit and they sent their gold to help exploit all conceiva-

ble projects. For a time American schemes were the rage. Public lands were the first and great commodity for speculators. They were bought at the low price of $1.25 an acre, but this price might afterwards bound to any figure. Other prices went along too. Thus fictitious values began, and they constantly stimulated each other.

While the people were thus overreaching the possible in their excited enterprise, the various deranging acts of government affecting the distribution of its revenues took place. These have been considered as they happened. They were: the enforced liquidation of the Bank of the United States; the subsequent transfer of public funds to a new set of banks, not as strong as the old one and its branches, but with executive encouragement to loan the funds to the people liberally; the excessive issue of notes by all banks; the enactment which next recalled the public funds from the various deposit banks in order to redistribute them in donations among the States; and last, the specie circular, suddenly demanding gold or silver at the land offices. These were a series of events, some of which encouraged speculation, and all of which were disturbing to monetary relations. Yet there is no precedent for believing that government could have snuffed out speculation at this particular epoch, even if all its acts had been orderly and discouraging to mad ventures. In great economic crises there is always a violent turning to government, as though it were suddenly recognised as a paternal and therefore a responsible institution.

Before Van Buren's entrance into office there had been public meetings in New York City for bewailing the high prices, one of which was followed by a flour riot. The treasury surplus was being distributed

according to the Whig plan, one quarter due on January 1, 1837, another on April 1. The latter was made after the panic was on, and it gave a powerful last wrench to the deposit banks. The specie circular was demanding gold and silver for the government, but these were now difficult to get, and England was asking for the same exchange from the United States instead of herself remitting coin as previously. For London was in distress too. Good times had collapsed everywhere.

On April 1, 1837, the financial failures in New York began. Bankers, real estate speculators, commission houses, and dry-goods jobbers began to go down together. The rest of the country followed pell-mell. Prices suddenly gave way and confusion was complete. A committee of New York merchants repaired to Washington to memorialize the new President. They were loudly of the opinion that the last administration had caused the disaster, and now its successor should bestir itself to mend matters. Their address read: "The error of one ruler has produced a wider desolation than the pestilence which depopulated our streets, or the conflagration which laid them in ashes." They were expressly certain that the crisis was in no way caused by "any excessive development of mercantile enterprise," and that New York itself was "an adequate judge of all questions connected with the trade and currency of the country." They demanded that the specie circular be withdrawn, and that an extra session of Congress be speedily convoked. In replying to them, Van Buren restated firmly his approval of Jackson's measures which he would not surrender. He refused to meddle with the specie circular, nor would he call an extra session of Congress.

This latter position he soon abandoned. For the next word from New York was that the worst had happened; its banks suspended specie payment on May 10, and it was not long before the State legislature made this suspension legal. Thus the value went out of paper money. The regular banks of deposit were no longer able to pay their notes in coin; consequently the national treasury began to retain its moneys as they were collected by government agents, and every collector of a port became temporarily a sub-treasurer of the nation.

Convinced that the government could not any longer remain in apparent indifference to the general cry of distress, the President issued a proclamation for the extra session to meet early in September. Moreover, while meeting its promise to give away thirty-seven millions, the government itself was suddenly near to embarrassment. Its funds were largely tied up with banks that could offer only their depreciated paper. Its income from duties was pretty sure to drop. Besides, some permanent disposition of the public money must be made by law. Such was the situation during the melancholy summer of 1837, before Congress came together.

The President bore himself with good sense through the ordeal. Even those who treat his career contemptuously as that of a "machine politician" admit that at this crisis he was courageous and almost statesmanlike. He was tried by unusual circumstances and by many insane demands of prostrate business. But through all he kept his head and his temper, repelling, as Von Holst concedes, "all reproaches with decision, but with no bitterness; and face to face with a new and great problem, he really evinced courage, firmness, and statesmanlike insight." Such conduct in

such times shows that personal fibre which is safely intrusted with large responsibility.

But when the extra session of Congress met in September, Van Buren had to do more than bear himself bravely. Things were so bad that a new prospectus was demanded. The opposition was prepared to tear it to pieces, and his party was not committed to it; but both, together with the people at large, expected a deliverance from the head of the government. Under these circumstances, his message was of unusual moment. It proved to be both bold and resourceful. It contained a plan for totally reorganizing the administration of national finances. For this reason it is a state paper of great historical interest. The President clearly traced the line of causes which had brought on the crisis; government had not produced it and government could not cure it. The government, however, was responsible for the care of its own funds. The Bank of the United States had been declared unsafe, and the State banks, he admitted, had proved to be an unfortunate experiment. Neither had stood the test of a financial panic and neither ought to be restored. The new system proposed that the government itself do its fiscal business, that is, "the collection, safe keeping, transfer, and disbursement of the public money," through its own appointed agents. This was the independent treasury scheme, or a divorce of the government from banks. Van Buren originated the simple but apparently unthought-of idea. As further measures of relief, he favoured a bankrupt law which should apply to "corporations and other bankers." Also he proposed that the fourth instalment of the surplus should not be distributed to the States for the obvious reason that the surplus was no longer available; and that

treasury notes be issued to meet the stringency in the Treasury. He declared himself to be entirely in favour of the provisions of the specie circular, which furnished sound currency for debts to the government.

Van Buren held firmly the opinion that government had no constitutional right to go beyond these general measures in its aid. It had no corporate responsibility beyond giving to people good money and collecting and paying its debts in the same good money. With the management of domestic and foreign exchanges it had no concern.

Congress was in bad humour to receive favourably a new proposition. The opposition was in systematic training and was looking for errors on the part of the administration from the start. Neither was a new scheme likely to have any advocates among a party devoted to the old Bank. The Democrats themselves were downhearted. They felt somewhat aloof from an administration that had been ushered in by a panic. They secured their Speaker in the House by only three votes. Yet, in spite of feeling no enthusiasm, and of the fact that an independent treasury was not a party question but one raised by the President's initiative, they soon fell into line to support the programme of the administration. Accordingly, their first bill proposed to postpone the distribution of the fourth surplus instalment indefinitely. This was really a simple necessity, for the lightness of custom revenues and of land sales was embarrassing the Treasury. It had no money to give away. Yet Clay and Webster maintained that so long as the government had promised these certain amounts to the States it was dishonourable to do anything less. They even maintained that the money ought to be borrowed by

the nation and given to the States. The bill to withhold the last quarter passed, but with many great names against it.

The Whigs also opposed and ridiculed the next bill to issue ten millions in treasury notes to fill up the depleted Treasury. Jackson's experiments in hard money had brought the government to issue its own paper money, they deridingly said. There was some basis for this imputation, but it did not tell the whole story. Certainly, when the government was in want it had to provide money for itself. The administration party carried through this bill also.

The great contest of the session, however, was over the Sub-Treasury Bill, as Van Buren's plan came to be called. It was not settled in that session nor in the next, nor until that of 1839-'40, and its long discussion was memorable in the history of Congress. The bill comprised the suggestions of Van Buren's message on that question. Simply stated, it was that government revenues, collected in gold and silver, should be kept by government officers in safe custody. They were not to be loaned or otherwise used until the government ordered them to be paid out or to be transferred for safe keeping to the central treasury at Washington or to its various sub-treasuries. Democrats had in the matter to make a sharp turn, for they had, as Jackson men, thrust the public money upon the banks, with the understanding that it was to be used for the accommodation of individuals. Now they proposed to take it back and to keep it forever in a strong box. Van Buren must have changed his mind too, though it cannot be known what his financial views really were while he served Jackson.

As for the Whigs, this innovation alarmed them for the banking system, for business interests, and

for free institutions. They stood for what had been even the bad things which they had just finished opposing. In the long debate Clay led the opposition. He was then sixty years old, and the sincerity of his intense feeling on the question cannot be doubted. His brilliant oratory concealed much weak reasoning. He saw in the sub-treasury system the overthrow of republican institutions. He declared it to be unconstitutional. By its means, he thought, "that perilous union of the purse and sword, so justly dreaded by our British and Revolutionary ancestors, would become absolute and complete." He believed that were the Sub-Treasury Bill to become law it would be "fatal to the best interests of this country and ultimately subversive of its liberties."

Webster's objections to the sub-treasury plan were reasonable and stated without emotional exaggeration. He feared principally that it would withdraw great sums of money from active use. In an important and exhaustive speech on the subject of the currency, he maintained that it was the right and duty of the government to regulate and control the currency for the benefit of the people. Webster agreed with Clay in thinking that the general good demanded not a new financial system but another Bank of the United States.

Some alliances were broken up by the sub-treasury measure. Calhoun formally parted company with Clay and the Whigs. He went back into the Democratic ranks for reasons which he amply explained. The furtherance of his dearest doctrines—State rights and slavery—demanded the change, he declared. With the Whigs he had fought Jackson as a dangerous Executive; but now their success against the administration would mean the dominance of the Whig

principle of consolidation, which was antagonistic to that of the State-righters. In Van Buren he did not fear an autocrat, and in the sub-treasury he thought he saw less concentration of Federal power than in the triumph of the Whig party. A "personal debate" followed this ceremonious leave-taking. It was called "the great debate between Clay and Calhoun." Both senators reviewed their parts in the compromise of 1833, each one asserting that he had then saved the other's political life. J. Q. Adams wrote that "Clay had manifestly the advantage in the debate."

The Sub-Treasury Bill passed in the Senate; but in the House the defection of the banking interest, the so-called conservatives, was sufficient to defeat it in the extra session. Van Buren bent to the decision with a grace which did not reflect the determination of his purpose. The autumn elections of that year in the State of New York expressed also a lack of support where the President had looked for it. His independent treasury did not lose ground, however, in the Twenty-fifth Congress, the first regular session of which met in December, 1837; nevertheless, it again was held up in the House, and so had to wait for the Twenty-sixth Congress. In the meantime, Clay's proposal for a new United States Bank having been voted down as also inexpedient, the provisional situation continued, by which Federal officers held the Federal funds in safe keeping. A sub-treasury system was really in operation while legislators were declaiming against it. In 1840 Van Buren secured the victory of his great measure in the House as well as in the Senate, and the independence of the Federal Treasury was established by law. This law was repealed in 1841, set up again in 1846, and has since that date been fundamental in government finance.

During the year 1838 business began to look up. The banks of New York resumed on May 10, and before autumn resumption was almost general. Trade promptly revived and people recovered hope. American paper was again good in London. Speculation revived too. But before the premature restoration of good times had spread very far there came a second catastrophe. The price of cotton fell again in the summer of 1839, and in October of the same year the old Bank, now the United States Bank of Pennsylvania, went down with a crash, taking with it nearly all the Southern and Western banks. This second collapse had also been precipitated by sudden money stringency in London. It was not so overwhelming as that of 1837, but it was a dreary check to business trying to recover itself. The next revival would be sounder but it would have to be slower and more toilsome. While the renewed depression affected the hopes of the administration, it also demonstrated to the people that banks ought not to be the mainstay of the nation. Nevertheless when, the next summer, Van Buren won his triumph over banks it was at the cost of his own election a few months later. His measure was greater than his own popularity; it triumphed over the Whigs, but the Whigs would soon be roaring him out of the presidency.

Soon after Van Buren had announced his scheme of Federal finance, his adherents began to be called Loco-focos, because their financial tenets were considered visionary. Originally the Loco-foco party broke from the Democratic ranks, on account of their anti-monopolist doctrines and their distrust of all banks and privileged corporations. In 1836 they organised as the Equal Rights party and had a "declaration of rights" which limited the operation of

unequal laws, opposed bank notes and paper money, and made war on special legislation. They had worked with the Whigs as independents, but now, drawn to Van Buren's anti-bank principles, they united with the regular Democrats, whereupon the whole party was saddled with their name.

Van Buren had assumed, in his inaugural address, that the agitation of the slavery question had signally failed. That could not have been a genuine statement, for during the previous winter Congress had been stirred more deeply than before over the right of petition, and though the gag resolution had been passed again, there was no sign of the weakening of abolitionism, but rather the contrary. Adams had had his tragi-comic tilt with the House and had come off best, just before Van Buren took office. The anti-slavery societies in the Northern States were increasing. The movement was almost beyond the period of needing leaders; it was becoming a public sentiment and rolling up to the dismay of compromise men. The general radical tendencies of such extremists as Garrison were perverting its direct course, but only temporarily. It was finding the straight level of popular moral sense.

Before the regular session of Congress met in 1837 there had occurred on the border of the free State of Illinois a tragedy which touched Northern sentiment more than the fifteen hundred abolition societies. Elijah P. Lovejoy was shot down by a mob of anti-abolitionists while defending his free printing-press. In Boston, where recently Garrison had been led through the streets with a rope about his body, there was a meeting at Faneuil Hall to protest against this brutal attack on liberty. Dr. Channing spoke, and young Wendell Phillips came out with an eloquence

new to the public as an abolitionist. A few months later Pennsylvania Hall, the meeting-house of the abolitionists in Philadelphia, was burned. But persecution at large, which now, singularly enough, was blazing out at the North where no one believed in slavery, could not stifle the question; neither could the desperate struggle to suppress agitation in Congress. Calhoun's "test" resolutions for the intrenching of slavery, somewhat modified, passed the Senate by a large vote. In the House there were angry scenes during this session. Slade's excoriating speech on slavery was followed by an ostentatious secession of slave-holding members—the first secession. But matters were smoothed over for the incensed gentlemen and the gag rule won its third season. Yet during the session of 1837-'38, petitions relating to slavery, bearing 300,000 signatures, were presented.

These were portentous agitations, but to the administration, and to nearly all concerned in the immediate business of government they had not nearly the significance that they have in retrospect. Another question had got mixed up with abolition in the District. Jackson had managed to have the independence of Texas tacitly acknowledged by the appointment of a diplomatic agent to Texas. A Texan envoy speedily reached Washington, and during the summer of the panic proposed to the perplexed President the immediate annexation of Texas. Van Buren had the quick sense to refuse to consider the proposal. He did not want a war with Mexico, and he did, with all moderate Northern men, want to keep down the anti-slavery agitation. He knew the Northern temper and anybody could see the Southern. The South desired the new soil of Texas for slave soil, and the Northern agitators saw the new strategic point and rallied to it.

Not heeding Van Buren's desire to avoid the point, the South pressed for immediate annexation. But the Senate would not act, and Adams in the House exposed their ulterior purpose. As a consequence, the flood of petitions praying for the abolition of slavery in the Federal District of Columbia began to have added a clause against the admission of Texas.

In order to divert attention from an issue which would certainly array political and popular forces in new combinations, and which could wisely be postponed, Van Buren took up the settlement of American claims against Mexico, and of the boundary between the United States and Texas. The settlement with Mexico was not arranged until 1840, when the old claims were satisfactorily arranged. These had no rightful connection with the war which came later although they were then speciously trumped up. Texas was making an unscrupulous claim to an extension of territory. According to it, Mexico, in recognizing Texan independence, was asked to let go not merely the original state of Texas, but Texas to the Rio Grande. This was the alluring land which the name Texas began to mean to the South, expanded further, in imagination, to a belt across the continent to the Pacific.

During his administration Van Buren had anxiety over the northeastern boundary. Maine and New Brunswick were still each claiming a slice from the other's pretensions. The border excitement became intense, and a serious collision threatened. When Congress gave the President full powers, he sent General Winfield Scott to the scene. The general and the lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick agreeably arranged to leave the unsettled dispute to the departments of state of their respective governments, while

each disputant held to his claim in the meantime. An insurrection among the British subjects of Upper Canada also occasioned the administration some uneasiness at about the same time, for there was sympathy across the American line and some volunteer aid was extended. The President promptly discouraged such an attitude by issuing a proclamation which announced the neutrality of the United States, and denied protection to any American citizens who should abet the rebellious disturbance. Thus, though there were serious differences yet to be adjusted, there was quiet for the present on the British border.

The Whig convention which nominated Harrison and Tyler was held at the close of 1839. Their noisy campaign had well begun before the Democratic convention assembled the following May. The Democrats felt vaguely that they would have to labour under a disadvantage. They had known what it was to have a popular candidate carried into office by the people while the politicians rode along. Now they saw that the opposition party had hit upon the same expedient—not principles, but a cry. Jackson and Van Buren had furnished the Democrats with a strict set of principles, but they were so exact as to have caused them some losses. However, they were not dismayed; theirs was the people's party; the methods of the Whigs were too contemptible to carry the vote of sensible persons. There was no division in the party over the renomination of Mr. Van Buren,—even Tennessee and North Carolina were now in line. So, with an unobjectionable candidate, who had a record for carefulness in trying times and a platform of principles, they felt they had a well-established surety of winning.

The convention at Baltimore made a beginning by

adopting unanimously a platform of nine resolutions. The first stated the limited powers of the Federal government under the Constitution; the second, the unconstitutionality of internal improvement; the third, the unconstitutionality of assuming State debts; the fourth, the injustice of special industrial legislation by the Federal government; the fifth, the duty of economy in conducting public affairs, and the principle that revenue ought not to exceed expenses; the sixth, the danger of a United States Bank; the seventh, the inimicability of anti-slavery agitation to the Union; the eighth, the desirability of the separation of the moneys of the government from banking institutions; and the last, the privilege of becoming citizens and owners of soil as a cardinal principle in the Democratic faith. The convention also unanimously presented Mr. Van Buren for reëlection, and it unanimously refrained from choosing between the candidates for vice-president.

But when election time came the Democrats jeered no more at the shouting Whig campaign. Whig majorities coming in changed their derision to alarm and then anger. They shut their eyes to the first returns and declared that the day would yet be theirs. But November brought no reversal, only the certainty of a crushing defeat. Van Buren received but 60 of the electoral votes, while Harrison was carried in by a majority larger than Jackson had at his second election.

The course of events during Van Buren's administration would have been against the most strongly fortified popularity. The crisis of 1837 and the second collapse two years later were irretrievably associated in the minds of the people with the Executive who had held that government was not a guardian

to save individuals from financial calamity. The second costly and murderous war with the Seminoles was still dragging on, a cause of deserved, and much undeserved, criticism. Before Van Buren quitted office $14,000,000 had been spent in carrying out Jackson's policy of the forcible removal of the Southern Indians to the new Territory. Moreover, some of the Democratic spoilsmen had been large defaulters. This counted against Van Buren, though he had not screened them from investigation. It was said that the expenditures of government had been lavish. Finally, Democratic party discipline was not borne as meekly as during the days of the despot. Everything reacted against Jackson's successor, and the result of the election of 1840 was not surprising after all.

Van Buren's cabinet, which had been in the main the one that Jackson left, was somewhat broken up before his term closed, but not through any unfriendliness of relations. His was an administration of unusual amicableness. The White House under his rule was a pleasant and dignified mansion. Clay once spoke of him in the following words: "I have always found him in his manner and deportment civil, courteous and gentlemanly; and he dispenses in the noble mansion which he now occupies . . . a generous and liberal hospitality. An acquaintance with him of more than twenty years' duration has inspired me with respect for the man, although I regret to be compelled to say, I detest the magistrate."

Having welcomed and entertained the new President, Van Buren at his leisure withdrew from the capital where he had spent the last score of years. While still lingering at New York he attended the funeral ceremonies of President Harrison. For his

retirement he had purchased a comfortable estate near his native village of Kinderhook. Although he was not sixty years old and not out of the presidential race, he looked forward to the honour which the ex-presidents had enjoyed, when finally retired.

Van Buren was not out of politics. He and his friends saw in the dissensions of the Whigs under Tyler the promise of another Van Buren triumph in 1844. But he was not alert to adapt himself to the new issue of Texas which Tyler had precipitated. To the South, mad for Texas, Polk became suddenly vastly more acceptable than Van Buren, who was chilling to that enterprise. After the nomination, as a true party man he concealed his wound and supported Polk. But he believed that his enemy Calhoun had given him this thrust in the house of his friends, and in his heart he had no forgiveness for the man who had both blocked his course and started the country buccaneering after empire.

The swashbuckler leadership of the slave barons against Mexico stirred his moral resentment also. This was the nucleus in his mind of an increasing number of personal and partisan resentments awakened by President Polk's rough disdain of the New York Democracy, as represented by Van Buren and his friends. Van Buren's protesting faction came to be called the "Barnburners." They seceded from the Democratic convention of 1848 which nominated Cass, and with a sudden broadness of view determined to lift a banner that would muster the entire anti-slavery force of the North from all parties. Such a party as this new one might succeed in electing its man; it would be pretty certain to defeat the South-led Democracy. Consequently, the Barnburners called a general anti-slavery convention at Buffalo in

1848, organized a Free Soil party and nominated Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams, on a platform of Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor and Free Men. This meant a general protest against the inhumanity and arrogance of the slave power, and a prohibition of slavery in all territory controlled by the government, with no new slave States to come in.

It was a strange company of reformers that Van Buren gathered around him. Webster said, "If Mr. Van Buren and I should meet we would both laugh." No one knows how seriously the veteran took his new situation. Mr. William Allen Butler says: "Mr. Van Buren's name was in it, but not his head nor his heart. Great words were inscribed on its banner. But they were words of advance and not of strategy, and Mr. Van Buren was too deeply entrenched in his old political notions to utter them in earnest." The plan succeeded, however, and the Democrats were defeated by the diversion.

Of course the Southern Democrats never forgave Van Buren; and when he returned to his Democratic affiliations again, he was detested by the South as a double renegade. Naturally, too, his talisman with his trained Northern following was broken. Altogether the episode was bad for Van Buren, both in his own time and in history. He had almost earned a reverence as an original and patriotic statesman, almost a place among the Democratic fathers. But this unaccountable eccentricity seemed to betray a secret frailness which the years of self-discipline had only covered up, not destroyed. Men had apparent reason for saying that adversity showed up the man.

His remaining years were spent either abroad or at his home near the Hudson. He had fully returned

to the Democratic fold and used his influence for its candidates. After his Free Soil protest he was no worse in his weakening before the Southern effrontery than was Webster, and other bold champions of the Union. He lived to see the blue regiments marching down Broadway to carry on the fight which he had too briefly headed; and he saw them as a staunch Unionist. On July 24, 1862, while the army of the Potomac and the army of Virginia were racing for Washington, Van Buren died.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

(PART OF ONE ADMINISTRATION—1841.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WHIGS IN POWER.

The twenty years from the close of Van Buren's administration to the beginning of Lincoln's constitute in United States history a period of momentous events, but of mediocre presidents. It was the period of the transition from the ancient politics to the new, of the birth of the great party that was to dominate during the second half century, of the series of fateful decisions by which the Democratic party committed itself to the issues that ended in ruin. It was a time of confusion and compromise, of bullying and cowardice, in politics; and it was the time of a lifting up of an entirely new set of moral judgments among the plain people, which eventually gave to politics a straight path. The period covers a victorious but discreditable war with weak neighbours, and the grabbing of an imperial territory from the defeated foe. It also covers the introduction into general use of the electric telegraph, with its enormous effect in hastening the march of public events.

But the presidents of this epoch were inferior men to the race which ended with Van Buren, although if they had not been suddenly succeeded by the towering figure of Lincoln, their comparative smallness would not be so conspicuous. But if the presidents were small men there were great men behind them who were taking large places in history. Clay, Calhoun, Webster, and John Quincy Adams reached their zenith of fame, if not of influence, in these days; and Sumner, Greeley, and Seward were creating the new era.

The month's presidency of Gen. William Henry Harrison deserves a chapter chiefly because his election was a fact which interrupted the course of the Democratic party. For forty years there had been only Democratic-Republican presidents. In that time there had been only one arrest of the working of the principles inaugurated by Jefferson. That was during the administration of John Quincy Adams, who was himself a Democratic-Republican, but who gave accent to the republican part of the name rather more than to the democratic.

Now, however, in the election of General Harrison both the Democratic party and the Democratic principles received their first definite check.

No small part of the significance of this interference was in the character of the personage to whom the people turned. The Democrats were so entrenched in the government after forty years of power that they considered themselves the nation itself. They could not comprehend that the various developments of opposition during the last ten years were anything but mutinies, largely personal in nature. They still had all the history, all the traditions, and all the offices. They were the political

aristocracy, and they had an exasperating arrogance. They operated all the machinery of government, from the centre to the remotest post-office, and their civil service had gathered a great deal of corruption and dishonesty. Herein was the naturalness of the people's amazing enthusiasm over a very homely hero who was one of themselves, and who had no part whatever in the scandals and intrigues of which they were sick.

But although General Harrison was now a plain old farmer, he had a military record second only to Jackson's; he also had a long official record, absolutely untarnished, as one of the great makers of the West; and furthermore, he had in him the best blood of the country. His last English ancestor was a Parliamentarian colonel under Cromwell, and was executed at the Restoration for his part in adjudging Charles I. to death. The son of the regicide established his house in Virginia, and raised descendants who were prominent in governing the colony. Presently, one of them, Benjamin Harrison, was in the Congress at Philadelphia which was debating the question of independence. It was he who in humour carried John Randolph to the chair in his arms when that patriot was elected president of the body; and it was he, on behalf of his committee, who moved the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, and he was one of the signers.

The son of this stout signer was William Henry Harrison, who was born at Berkeley, Virginia, February 9, 1773. Too young to have any part in the Revolution, he did not leave school until Washington had been two years president. In 1791 he left Hampden-Sydney College, destined by his father to study medicine under the famous Dr. Rush of Phil-

adelphia. But the boy had other tastes, and when, during his journey to enter the office of Dr. Rush, the news of his father's death reached him, he straightway abandoned the medical career and announced his intention of becoming a soldier. The dissuasions of his guardian, Robert Morris, and of his family, were ineffectual, and soon President Washington gave him a commission as ensign in the regular army, and he started West to fight Indians.

It was a trying time for the Western settlers. Thousands, since the Revolution, had been pushing into the trackless West with their families. They had floated down the Ohio river, some of them landing on the south and some on the north bank; the north side, which was to be Ohio and Indiana, was the newer venture. The Indians were making a bloody stand against the wagon-trains and log cabins of the invading civilization. Troops were sent on by the government to build forts and to offer what small protection was possible in the vast distances of the wilderness. Some of these soldiers were the first regulars of the new United States army; the others were militia, reckless, insubordinate and undisciplined. Two pitched battles had been fought with the Indians, and in both the troops had been defeated with terrible loss. Consternation was everywhere. The surviving settlers were seeking to escape, though there was no refuge. The Indians were elated, and had formed a confederacy of tribes for the extermination of the whites. The soldiers who had been able to reach Fort Washington (now Cincinnati) after their defeat were demoralized and worthless.

It was at this time that Ensign Harrison arrived at Fort Washington. He did his part in the restora-

tion of discipline and in the reconstruction of the defence; and he did it so well that when the new and well-organized army under General Wayne reached the post in 1793, he was made the general's aide-de-camp with the rank of lieutenant. One day in August, 1794, his opportunity came; he submitted a plan of march which was adopted and which led to a victory the following day. The Indians were scattered, and for a time peace returned to the settlers. Young Harrison was complimented by General Wayne, was promoted to a captaincy, and, barely twenty-one, was made commander of Fort Washington. His duty was to receive and forward arms and provisions to the posts further on, and to keep watch of the Indians. While here he fell in love with the daughter of Judge Symmes, and married her in impetuous fashion. After four years of service he resigned his commission and went to his new farm in North Bend, to make a family home.

But he was immediately appointed secretary of the North West Territory, under his old general, Governor St. Clair. It was a rare and sterling sort of men who were the citizens of this new land, north of the Ohio. Most of them had been of importance in their Eastern towns, and they had carried to their widely scattered homes not only daring and invincible purpose, but that intelligent *esprit du corps* out of which a nation quickly grows. When these men came together for their first legislature, in 1799, they chose Secretary Harrison to go to Congress as their delegate. The young man induced Congress to pass the act which made the West open to men of small means; that was the authorization of a universal survey by the government, by which the land was divided into uniform sections, half and quarter sec-

tions, and open to direct purchase by the settlers. This saved the pioneer from the speculators who were buying up unknown areas and luring emigrants to their loss.

The Territory of Indiana was being established, comprising what are now the great States of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin; and Harrison was made its first governor by President Adams. The confidence which that careful Executive had in the young man of twenty-six was shown in the despotic power with which he was clothed. He was endowed with leigslative authority (with the appointed judges); he appointed all military and civil officers; he had the sole powers of pardon and of executing all treaties with the Indians. All these functions he exercised until the Territory was able to have its legislature, after which he still continued its governor. The time of this service was in all 16 years, as he was twice appointed by Jefferson and once by Madison. His administration was apparently a judicious one; it seems certainly a humane one, for he sought to prevent the settlers from selling ardent spirits to the Indians, and he tried to introduce among the latter inoculation for smallpox.

The distinction of his long governorship was his dealing with Tecumseh, the greatest of the Indians, and his victory at Tippecanoe. He had negotiated a treaty with several tribes by which the United States purchased from them 3,000,000 acres. Tecumseh, the warrior chief of another tribe, protested that this treaty was null, because the continent belonged to all the Indians and therefore the land could not be sold without the consent of all. At a conference under the trees at Vincennes, Tecumseh appeared with an escort of 400 armed warriors, and only

the moral courage and nerve of the unprotected governor prevented a massacre. Tecumseh departed to stir up a general war against the whites, and Harrison appealed to the government for aid. After a series of depredations by the Indians, the governor marched against their camp at Tippecanoe with a small army of 900 men, regulars and volunteers, and a good many Kentucky generals and colonels.

On the 6th of November, 1811, this little army encamped near the Indian stronghold. Expecting an attack, the governor disposed his men in a hollow square; posted a strong guard of pickets; and the army went to sleep in its tents, apparently without entrenchments. The governor himself arose at 3.45, and in a few minutes heard the picket's shot which announced the attack. Instantly the savages were swarming into the camp, meeting some of the soldiers at their tent doors. The camp fires were extinguished and the battle went on till day broke, hand to hand, with desperate charges and counter charges. The governor was cool and his men fought well. At daylight the Indians ran away, after inflicting a loss of 108 upon the white force. This battle broke up the hostile confederacy. Its chief effect, however, was in the glorification of the warlike governor. The victory was considered to be of enormous importance to the Territory, and the gallantry of the commander aroused throughout the whole country an extraordinary and a growing admiration. Compared with the later tactics of United States soldiers against the Indians, some of the dispositions by Harrison seem short-sighted and clumsy. But it was evidently the best method of fighting known at that day, and it brought peace for a while, until the war with England started the Indians afresh.

Speedily the War of 1812 was on, and the West turned to the popular governor of Indiana as its natural commander. As most of the troops must come from Kentucky, he was brevetted by Governor Scott as a Kentucky major-general. After a time the Federal government made him a brigadier-general, and gave him supreme command of the military forces in the Northwest, with absolute *carte blanche.* His aim was to recapture Detroit, which Hull had surrendered to the British. But his trouble was to get there, to get his army together, to get rations for them, to get anywhere. All Ohio and Indiana were his marching grounds; that is, he had to rendezvous his troops and supplies through a vast wilderness and swamp, over projected but unmade roads. The problem was too big and communication was too scanty. It was a year before he was able to strike his blow, and in the meantime his army had suffered pathetically from privation and some defeats. But after Perry's destruction of the British fleet on Lake Erie had cut off Detroit, it was evacuated by the British army and Harrison marched in. He pursued the British, and at the Thames, on October 5, 1813, inflicted a crushing defeat on the dispirited enemy by means of an impetuous cavalry charge. His work in clearing the Northwest of the British now being done, and his command being abridged by the government, Harrison soon resigned his commission and went once more to his farm at North Bend.

His exploit, one of the few land victories of that dismal war, gave him a marked prestige throughout the country. He was sent to Congress by his district in 1816, and served there for three years. Then he was elected to the State Senate of Ohio, which in 1824 sent him to the United States Senate.

His service at Washington while not conspicuous was marked by sincerity and by practical sense. He received recognition both for his military campaigns and for his long, statesmanlike administration of Indiana; he was considered sound, comprehending, and incorruptible; some saw in him promise of larger place. But his senatorial career was cut short by his appointment as minister to the new power of Colombia, in 1828, just before John Quincy Adams went out of office. It was an error of judgment for him to leave the Senate for this side-tracking, but there was then in the new nationalities of South America an appeal to many imaginations, fed on the grandiose sentiments of liberty and of revolt against oppression so abundant in that day, which allured a man who always had enough of sentiment.

His imagination, however, had little opportunity, for as soon as Jackson was inaugurated, Harrison's place was wanted as a reward for somebody, and he was recalled immediately. He again retired to his farm, an honourably poor man, and at the age of 56 took up the earning of a plain livelihood. He developed his farm, and was glad to add to his income by a clerkship in the county court. He was not hidden, however. He made a good many speeches, and though they were in the orotund, stilted fashion which was the curse of that period, they radiated a certain candour and soundness of heart which got hold of the public mind. Presently, in 1835, a State convention of Pennsylvania anti-Masons nominated him for president. He proved the most popular of the several candidates opposed to Van Buren; he carried Vermont, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, and in the electoral college polled 73 votes of the 124 cast, against Van

Buren's 170. This unexpected success at once stamped him as an available candidate for another day.

The prospects of a Whig success in the election of 1840 were promising. In 1836 they had purposely scattered their votes; now it looked as if they could safely attempt to put up a single candidate. Van Buren's administration had fallen into such popular contempt that if only the right Whig could be named he would of a certainty unite the general protest. But who was the right Whig? Not Webster, certainly; it was clear he had no following, anxious as he was for the presidency. Was it Clay? He was the father of the Whig party. He had god-fathered all the secessions from the Democrats. He had built up the formidable opposition, and with the utmost use of his tactfulness had laboured to bring the divergent factions into some common muster. His longing for the presidency was no secret, and it was the open Whig avowal that when the time came they would make him president. This was the proper time.

Yet as the months wore on the Whigs began to be afraid. Indications did not look so favourable. Spite of his happy arts, Clay's long political life had left many enemies in his wake. With all his compromises he could not bring together certain antagonistic factions in the heterogeneous party. The Southern anti-tariff Whigs hated him for being the arch-protectionist. The Western squatters considered him no friend of theirs. The anti-Masons looked on him with distrust. The abolitionists scorned him as a temporizer, as an enemy who properly should have been a friend. Clay had never avoided the struggle of principles, and it was his bad luck that his times furnished a big crop of principles,

and that people took them with intense seriousness. Nevertheless, he was Clay, the brilliant, magnetic, chivalrous Clay—the broadest-minded of statesmen, with an unimpeachable patriotism. He was the logical and the rightful candidate, and had his friends been firm his prestige would have borne down the factional hostilities.

But there were other signs also unfavourable to Clay. The elections of 1838 in a number of States showed bad losses for the Whigs. Defeats happened in Maine, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana; New York showed alarming Democratic gains, and in Massachusetts the Whigs lost their governor by one vote. Besides, there was a growing attention being paid to General Harrison. In 1837 he received two nominations, one from the anti-Mason convention in Philadelphia, another from a State convention in Ohio. He was touring in Ohio, making modest but very telling speeches. He was a military hero, and he seemed to have no enemies. What was Whiggery to do?

Clay recognized the puzzle and dealt with it honourably. He begged his friends to do all that was possible to secure concord, even to his own sacrifice if necessary. But it does not appear that they were equally candid with Clay. Although he knew there were many defections and much timorousness, he did not suspect the extent or the definiteness of the plot against him. New York State Whigs originated a novel method for weakening the popular enthusiasm for him. They instituted a triangular correspondence system by which, for instance, a man in Albany would write to a man in Utica, saying, "Do your utmost for Clay in your district, we can do nothing here," while another man in Utica wrote the same

thing to Rochester, and Rochester was sending a like message to somebody else in Albany. It was mediaeval but effective.

Another method was devised for the convention itself to ward off the sweeping frenzy which a clever presentation of Clay's name to the body would surely produce. Each State delegation was to meet in informal caucus and agree upon a name; the representatives of these delegations were to meet in another informal caucus and report the names offered; when any name was found to have a sifted majority of this fashion, it was to be formally presented to the entire body. The laboriousness and unnaturalness of this scheme betrayed its purpose to the dullest; the managers were determined to defeat the one man, the open proposal of whose name would carry the convention like a flame. Clay protested against this unfairness, but he was assured he could afford to let his opponents have their way in this clumsy expedient. Clay's judgment was correct.

The Whig convention met in a new Lutheran church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, December 4, 1837, nearly a year before the election. In the days before the telegraph and the omnipresent daily newspaper, the creators of public sentiment had to reckon on plenty of time. In addition to the extraordinary contrivance, above described, for avoiding the peril of a landslide towards Clay, a motion was pushed through that each State delegation cast its final vote as a unit, a majority being considered the entire vote of the delegation; and furthermore, that no matter how many delegates had put in an appearance, the vote of the delegation be equal to the figure of the electoral vote of its State: that is, for instance, the number of New York delegates should have been 42,

equal to its presidential electors; suppose, however, only 30 were present, and of those, 16 desired one candidate; then, not only would those 16 cast in the convention the 30 votes of those present, but also the entire 42 votes which might have been present. This was the worst mockery of the elementary principles of suffrage ever recorded in the United States. The Whigs had attacked the unit rule, by which Van Buren had been railroaded to his nomination; in their own intrigue they not only stultified themselves, but discovered an original trick for defrauding a possible majority, so shameless that it has never been repeated.

It was not, however, until near midnight of the third day that a nomination could be announced. It was that of General Harrison. The true friends of Clay were in despair. Tyler of Virginia wept in his sorrow. His conspicuous grief for his friend made his nomination for the vice-presidency by the now generous Harrisonians as graceful as it was judicious. Harmonious speeches were made. The Clay men pointed to their sacrifice but promised unanimous support. No platform was adopted, for there was no set of principles the factions could agree upon. Bank, sub-treasury, tariff, State-rights, distribution of the surplus, slavery, Texas, secret societies,—no declaration regarding one of these issues could have been uttered by that convention without breaking the slender thread that hitched the sections of the party together. Their only union was in their purpose to turn the Democrats out, and in their selection of a man who would not offend their own contradictory doctrines.

Tyler's nomination to the vice-presidency was not so much due to his historic tears over Clay as to an

arrangement made long before, in which Clay was a party. In principles, Tyler of Virginia was a Democrat. To every one of the doctrines which had at various times been called Whig, he was opposed. Yet he called himself a Whig, persistently, because he was against Jackson and Van Buren. He was popular in Virginia, and Clay deemed it wise to pull in so large a following. But this adhesion of the Tyler contingent is a pertinent illustration of the fact that the Whigs were an alliance, not a party. Clay had essayed to build a party, but he was in too great a hurry to consolidate it on a common scheme. He let it spread out into a mob who could act together only by keeping silent as to their principles. Consequently, while Clay was the logical and rightful Whig candidate, he was no less logically and inevitably unavailable. He had engineered his own defeat, and had made necessary an Availability.

But if the Harrisburg convention of 1840 is memorable for the tragedy of Clay, it is more distinguished for its nomination of the best running candidate of a century of presidents. Harrison demonstrated several remarkable and unexpected facts in the capacious nature of the American people. He brought to light their hidden faculty of a universal and unreserved commotion; their faculty of temporary unrestraint in hero-worship; their faculty of confusing for a time the sense of great principles with a wild extravagance of personal idolatry; and yet their essential sanity in going crazy only over an ideal that appealed to the best human sentiments. The period probably could have furnished no more wholesome object for an all-around idealization than General Harrison; and the universal fusion, the extension of acquaintance, the revival of national spirit

produced by the public inebriety was of unquestionable good in the long run.

The campaign began naturally in Congress, then just assembling. The winter session gave opportune occasion for the making of Whig thunder. The administration was attacked for everything that had happened and that might have happened. The financial distress, the failures of wild-cat banks, the defalcations of office-holders, the debauchery of the civil service by the spoils system, the prodigal expenditures of government, were all ascribed to the administration without reticence in their portrayal. The official profligacy of the administration was compared to that of the Tarquins and the Caesars, the personal and expensive delicacies of taste of the President giving numerous choice texts for oratorical enlargement. In short, the attack was not made on the presentation of any new doctrines, but solely on the denunciation of misused opportunities, blunders, extravagance, and corruption.

The tearing-down programme was one that the people could perfectly understand. It required little thought on the part of the popular orators, and it had then, as always, an open road to the heart. On the one side was the rascality of the Tarquins, on the other the good old soldier, driven by the terrible Jackson to his farm and to poverty,—the impersonation of homely virtues and of honest public service.

Nearly all the writers who have attempted to describe that campaign admit the inadequacy of credible forms of expression to give a proper idea of its superlativeness. The country has seen some madnesses since then, but none have equalled that. The nation turned itself out of doors. Campaign meetings and processions became the vocation of all but

the bedridden. Whole towns would leave their houses empty to travel to other towns to attend meetings. These processions would often extend unbroken from one township to another. No village was without its Tippecanoe club, uniformed in coonskin caps, and with its emblems of a log cabin, a barrel of hard cider, and a mammoth rolling ball. The ball symbolized the universality of the movement, and the log cabin and hard cider were grateful reminders not only of the humble conditions wherein the chief had been found, but also of the days of rugged simplicity from which the whole nation had emerged only long enough before to be easily forgotten in the present artificiality of life. The spectacle of rich Whigs decking themselves in the togs of frontiersmen and calling the Democrats aristocrats was often humourous; but everything went, and the people were not letting their revival meetings be cooled by trifles.

Oratory was the highest talent known. The bombastic classic style of the period, abounding in Roman and Greek allusions, was the ordinary conveyance of the exhortation to "turn the rascals out" and put "Old Honesty" in. The heavy Websterian form of expression was the model of the village orator. General Harrison himself was a happy exponent of this kind of diction. All the great orators of the generation were out. Webster came back from his sulk in Europe and was saying that "every breeze says change." Clay was loyally supporting the ticket, with rhetoric if not argument, and exclaiming "the time for discussion is past—the nation has already pronounced its sentence."

The substance of the speeches mattered little,—wildfire was the desired thing. The people had come

forth to have the tremors of excitement run down their backs; never was a camp-meeting so eager to be stirred up as were the marching, singing crowds of this campaign. Its songs were probably its most conspicuous feature and have passed into history. The most popular was a droning chant to the tune of "The Little Pig's Tail," and it was loved because it had the refrain of the campaign—its pat humour particularly catching to the American sense—"Tippecanoe and Tyler too." Its chorus ran:

"Tippecanoe and Tyler too—Tippecanoe and Tyler too;
And with them we'll beat little Van, Van,
Van is a used-up man;
And with them we'll beat little Van."

A much-loved quatrain was:

"Farewell, dear Van,
You're not our man;
To guide the ship
We'll try old Tip."

Every one could comprehend the sentiment in

"The gathering ball is rolling still,
And still gathering as it rolls."

And all could join in,

"Ye office-holders, fed with pap,
Have very saucy grown;
We tell ye, sirs, we don't like that,
And mean to make it known.

With promises we've long been fed,
But do not like the treat;
We'd rather have a little bread
And something else to eat."

In another couplet there was the whole Whig plat-

form which the convention had omitted to pronounce:

"National-Republicans in Tippecanoe,
And Democratic-Republicans in Tyler too."

These roaring rhymes and unrhythmic songs went over the country in billows, and were an adequate expression of the brain-matter put into the campaign by the Whigs.

But underneath the senseless roar and doggerel, good things were going on. First of all, the fury was about a thoroughly good man—a typical American; not a subtle intellect like Clay's, with devious zigzags, but a square man of moral degree, the very triteness of whose maxims was wholesome for the people to say over to themselves. In the next place, the nation came together and got acquainted with itself. Never before had there been so much travel; never had any one individual seen so many others. People got out of their ruts; they saw beyond their four corners. They beheld crowds for the first time, and if the sight intoxicated them the memory of it sobered them; they gained a sense of their national fellowship and of the duty of coöperation. At Bunker Hill there gathered a crowd of 75,000; Dayton, Ohio, saw 100,000; and even to read about such vast masses, in those days when the steamboat and the railroad were first beginning to bring the isolated together, was an education. The greatest crowd of all gathered in Baltimore in May. It was a convention of the Young Men of America, called there by the Harrisburg convention. One of the historians* quotes a long story from the *Baltimore Patriot*,

* Stanwood.

in which the editor doubles up and falls down at the insufficiency of language to describe the scene. A few sentences only of this extraordinary yet honest attempt are repeated:

"Never before was seen such an assemblage of the people, in whose persons are concentrated the sovereignty of the government. In the language of the president of the day, '*Every mountain sent its rill,—every valley its stream*, and lo! THE AVALANCHE OF THE PEOPLE IS HERE!'

"It is impossible to convey the slightest idea of the sublime spectacle of the procession as it moved through the city. All that pen could write, all that the mouth of man could speak, all that the imagination can conceive of beauty, grandeur and sublimity, would fall short, far short, of the reality. · · · A hundred thousand faces were before you—age, manhood, youth, and beauty filled every place where a foothold could be got, or any portion of the procession could be seen; and you gazed on the pageant with renewed and increasing delight, and words failed to express what your heart felt or your eyes beheld. Nothing was wanting—nothing left to be desired,—the cup of human joy was full. The free men of the land were there,—the fiery son of the South, the substantial citizen of the East, the hardy pioneer of the West, were all there. It was the epitome of a great nation."

We may forget to be amused at the quaint and loaded rhetoric in feeling the sense of the Nation which was awakening indescribable emotions in the participants on those flag-waving crowds.

Against this avalanche the Democrats could put up no resistance. They scoffed at the senseless songs and the noise, and pointed to their elaborate plat-

form; they made songs and clatter themselves. But they were outsung, outroared,—and outvoted. The State elections came along in a scattering fire. Everything was Whig. That made the ball roll higher. The national elections in most cases followed the State elections. When all the votes of the people were counted, Harrison had 1,275,016, and Van Buren had 1,129,102. Harrison carried 19 of the 26 states; and when the electors cast their votes they gave 234 to Harrison and 60 to Van Buren.

There was a little popular vote of 7,069, distributed through the North, which got itself counted, but which nobody heeded except to jeer. It was for James G. Birney, the Abolitionist. But that was the most important set of votes cast in 1840. It represented a principle that had no turning back; it could wait but it would not compromise; twenty years later it would elect Lincoln.

The Democrats were dumfounded at the result of the election, for they had said the shouting campaign would burst its bubble at the polls. Now they inquired what the man really stood for who was to turn them from office. It was hard to tell. He had not been prominent enough as a statesman for his record to be enlightening. His letters and speeches abounded in oracular maxims which were good to hear but which left his attitude towards the specific public questions undefined till he was confronted by them. In his deprecation of Jackson's aggrandisement of the presidential office, he promised to keep the executive out of the legislative branch by a very sparing use of the veto power; he promised never to consent to a reëlection; he said that in all questions the president should follow the wishes of the people. All this, of course, was no policy at all, but it soundly

accorded with the Whig programme of having no programme beyond the vague word, Reform.

The genial old man with the penetrating eye arrived in Washington on his 68th birthday. His progress had been made slow by the welcomes of the people. Although the weather was severe, he had given himself with little reserve to these outdoor rejoicings. At Washington, on Inauguration Day, March 4, 1841, his managers put him on a white horse and made the inaugural procession pass twice over its course before he dismounted at the Capitol. It was not the dignity that should have been his, but the crowds could not see enough of him.

The inaugural address had been revised by Webster, who pruned it of much of its classic verbiage. "Twelve Roman pro-consuls and several citizens have I slain to-day, and yet they are not all dead," Webster whispered to a friend. The address was felicitous, but it offered little news as to the policy to be followed. An abjuring of interference in legislation, a minimum of vetoes, a purpose to check the misuse of patronage, an avoidance of trespassing upon the preserves of slavery, and an effort for concord,—these were the only promises he offered; yet through the address there runs unspoken the spirit of an honest purpose to do right.

Whether he was strong enough for this desire of right doing to be triumphant over the hungry factions waiting for their chance it is impossible to forecast. He summoned a special session of Congress to meet May 31, to consider the financial situation, and announced a strong cabinet, in which Webster was Secretary of State, that portfolio having been declined by Clay. But the President's first business was to attend to the office-seekers who were in larger

and noisier mobs than even when Jackson opened his career of reform; they slept in the corridors of the White House to waylay the President, who for two or three weeks could do nothing from daylight to midnight but attend to their demands.

Weakened by his overwork and his exposures, a sudden cold brought on the sickness under which in a few days he sank into death, April 4, 1841, exactly one month after the jubilant shouts of his inauguration.

Very tenderly the disappointed people bore him back to the banks of the Ohio, where he had drawn the sword which Washington gave him nearly fifty years before. And there, in the honourable plainness of his home, he was buried.

PRESIDENT JOHN TYLER.

(PART OF ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1841-1845.)

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FIRST UNEXPECTED PRESIDENT.

During the month of President Harrison's administration, Vice-President Tyler had been one of the least important personages in the official life of Washington. He had taken his modest part in the inauguration. But aside from his official oath his presence was superfluous both to the people and the politicians. The people were intoxicated with the triumph of their Desire, and were after the offices he had to give them. The politicians were intriguing for precedence in the new régime and planning for a programme of action.

In these plans of the Whig leaders the Vice-President was naturally not called upon for counsel or coöperation. In his person the vice-president is a reminder of a mortal contingency of the greatest possible dread; and accordingly it has been his rule of good taste to make himself no more conspicuous than necessary. In his official functions he can exert no influence upon the councils of the president and his cabinet; he can play no part in the contentions of

Congress; he is a do-nothing, a figurant, a background.

That was not the significance and the insignificance of the vice-president's office as it was conceived by the makers of the Constitution. They provided that of the two most favoured candidates before the electors, the one having most votes should be president and the other who had the next largest should be vice-president. That might mean, in certain events, that in the contest of two parties the majority should have the president and the minority the vice-president. But it would always mean, so the framers thought, that the electors in voting would be as careful in selecting one name as the other; for in voting "for two persons," without discriminating them for either office, the electors could not know which person would turn out to be the president and which the vice-president—save in such a case as that of Washington, where the choice of him was sure to be unanimous. This arrangement was awkward and perilous, as it proved when Burr came near to getting in ahead of Jefferson in 1801, although the electors had designed him for the second place. But the Constitution-makers had not regarded such a mischance; according to their theory—and here was one of the few cases where they showed themselves unsound theorists—the vice-president would always represent the electors' second choice for president, and the dignity of that fact would give to his otherwise empty office a significant honour.

After the Burr episode the 12th Amendment was adopted, so as to improve the situation; the electors were henceforth to specify the man intended for vice-president. This was to escape from one danger to plunge into another. For the vice-presidential office

lost its stateliness of meaning. Only once under the new system had a vice-president been afterwards elected to the chief place, and that was the exceptional instance when Jackson willed it to be so. Instead of the office evolving into an opportunity worth a great leader's ambition, the custom of nominating conventions indicated that it was more likely to become a consolation-prize tossed to the defeated weaker wing of the party; and even then not usually to the weaker wing's best man. This was notably the case in the nomination of Mr. Tyler at Harrisburg; when Harrison beat Clay it was considered to be below Clay's dignity to take the second place, so it was given to a man whom Clay was thought to favour.

It came to pass accordingly that immediately after the inauguration of the Whig administration, Vice-President Tyler, having no business either of office or of party in Washington, went home to his farm. Here he was during the month when Clay and Webster were tinkering at the Harrison programme. Here, on April 5, a courier from Washington handed him the summons from the cabinet:—

Washington, April 4, 1841.

To John Tyler, Vice-President of the United States:—

Sir: It becomes our painful duty to inform you that William Henry Harrison, late President of the United States, has departed this life.

This distressing event took place this day, at the President's mansion in this city, at thirty minutes before one in the morning.

We lose no time in despatching the chief clerk in

the State Department as a special messenger to bear you these melancholy tidings.

We have the honour to be, with highest regard,
Your obedient servants

DANIEL WEBSTER
THOMAS EWING
JOHN BELL
FRANCIS E. GRANGER
JOHN J. CRITTENDEN,—

all the cabinet except George E. Badger, the Secretary of the Navy, who was absent. It was the first time that the reason for the vice-presidency was realized.

Tyler started immediately for Washington, and arrived there in twenty-one hours, on the 6th of April, two days after the death of General Harrison. His first act was to summon the heads of the departments and to request them to retain their places. He was not aware that they had in the meantime expressed definitely to one another their want of confidence in him. But he soon learned that they did not regard him as a real president. They had addressed him in their summons as "Vice-President," and, in the absence of any precedent in this event of succession, they were inclined to consider him rather as trustee or executor of the late President's policy—they themselves being coördinate legatees. But Tyler had different views, and his conception has prevailed on the three following occasions of succession.

The new President took his oath before Chief Justice Cranch of the district Federal court on the next day after his arrival. On the 8th of April General Harrison's funeral took place, and the body

was carried from the city for its long journey westward.

President Tyler established himself in the White House on April 14, having made a proclamation appointing May 14 as a day of special fasting and prayer for the whole country. The unexpected arrest of all the Whig plans on the death of Harrison, made the party leaders turn to the new comer with grave questionings. What could they reckon on with him? For the first time they seriously inquired, Who is John Tyler? He had been in public life since he was twenty-one, yet he seemed to be so little understood that every fact of his life became suddenly of signal interest.

He was a Virginian who had come from a high lineage. While the Harrisons were a Parliamentarian family, the Tylers were royalists. But as the Colonial struggle against the royal ministers deepened, the Tylers, with most of the other loyalist Virginia families, became patriots and rebels against the king. When President Harrison's father went to the Continental Congress, President Tyler's father succeeded him as Speaker in the Virginia House of Delegates. But the Revolution was over, and Washington had been Chief Executive two years when John Tyler was born at Greenway, Virginia, on the 29th of March, 1790. He was a lad of bright mind, even precocious, and of distinct ambitions. When seventeen he had been graduated from William and Mary College. He was versatile, and showed special interest in history, poetry and music.

He turned to the law, as most of the aspiring young men of that day did, and in 1809 he was admitted to the bar. He had just reached his majority in 1811 when he was elected to the Virginia legislature,

where he took strong stand in support of President Madison's war policy. One of his first legislative jousts was over the very question which he fought out again when he entered the presidency, thirty years later—the Bank of the United States. In 1811, when its twenty-year charter was to expire, it had few friends in Virginia. Here it was regarded as a gross invasion of State-rights, and the legislature instructed its senators in Washington to vote against its re-charter. Only one of them obeyed, and he did so under protest. Thereupon Tyler introduced resolutions of censure, reasserting the unconstitutional character of the Bank.

He served briefly as a captain of militia in 1813, when the British were hovering near Richmond. He was reëlected to legislature repeatedly until 1816, when he was all but unanimously elected to the lower House of Congress. Here he distinguished himself as a strict constructionist, with independent leanings. He opposed Calhoun's bill for internal improvements. He opposed, as premature, Clay's proposal in 1818 to send a minister to revolted South American provinces. He opposed a national bankruptcy bill. He condemned Jackson's course in Florida as one of flagrant insubordination. He got in a shot against the Bank. All this, especially his Bank speech, so pleased his constituents that they reëlected him.

In the next Congress Tyler made a pronounced hit in his opposition to the Missouri Compromise. While hoping that slavery would not be perpetuated, he claimed that it would diminish by being spread. Moreover, he argued that the government had no right to impose restrictions on it anywhere—not even in the territories. Though defeated in this fight,

he pleased Virginia. He was mentioned as a man of the future. Naturally his opposition to the protective tariff added to his popularity at home.

After these two Congresses he retired for a time from Washington, and again served in the Virginia legislature. When the Tennessee legislature in the interest of Jackson attacked the Congressional caucus by which Crawford had been nominated, Tyler stood by the old caucus system. He was now twice elected governor of Virginia, in 1825 and 1826. As national politics began at this time to separate men into two parties,—one headed by Adams, favouring the "American policy" of tariff, Bank, and internal improvements, and the other of strict constructionists, opposed to all these things,—Tyler naturally kept with the latter. Yet he stood with a certain independence, after all, and he owed his election to the Senate in 1826 to a singular combine of the friends of Adams and Clay to oust John Randolph, who had made himself obnoxious by his relations with Jackson.

As senator, Tyler voted against the "tariff of abominations," of 1820. He voted to confirm Van Buren as minister to England, but he condemned, as high-handed, Jackson's proclamation against the South Carolina nullifiers, although he disapproved of nullification itself as unconstitutional and impolitic. In this time of stress he tried to act as a mediator between Clay and Calhoun, and in this effort earnestly supported the compromise tariff which Clay introduced in 1833.

During Jackson's second term Tyler revolted still more against his headstrong arbitrariness. Tyler's long opposition to the Bank as the "original sin against the Constitution," as he called it, did not

lead him to approve Jackson's despotic methods towards it. He liked the new title "Whig" to designate the opponents of the "Tory" supporters of Jackson's tyranny. Much as he condemned the latitudinarianism of the National Republicans, he more condemned the unbridled autocracy of Jackson. In the matter of the Bank, he proposed in a speech in 1834 to go to the root of the matter by submitting the question to the people, definitely, in the shape of a constitutional amendment, either expressly allowing or expressly forbidding such an institution. He claimed that both Clay and Webster were ready to coöperate with him in this project, but nothing ever came of it. Tyler was obviously coming to where he would make a combination with loose constructionists for the sake of overthrowing the Jackson pretensions. He voted for Clay's famous resolution to censure Jackson.

The muddle of factions grew still more complex in 1835. A body of Southern nullifiers, headed by Calhoun, broke off from the Democratic party and called themselves "State-Rights Whigs." Yet they were with the Whig party of Clay and Webster only in opposition to Jackson, while on all issues of principle they were old-line Democrats. They nominated Tyler for vice-president in 1836 on the ticket with Hugh L. White, and he got forty-seven electoral votes.

Before this election of 1836, however, he had resigned from the Senate. When Benton's memorable resolution to expunge the vote of censure upon President Jackson was before the Senate, the Virginia legislature instructed its senators to vote to expunge. Both senators refused to obey, and Tyler resigned, as in duty bound considering his record

of twenty-five years before in the similar case when the shoe was on the other foot. This took him from Congress forever; but before he went he gave pronounced views on Calhoun's "gag resolution," forbidding the presentation of anti-slavery petitions; he denounced the measure as short-sighted because it denied the natural right of petition and gave thus a moral advantage to the Abolitionists. It was during this retreat from Washington that the Harrisburg convention selected him as a friend, admirer and supporter of Clay to take the vice-presidential place on the ticket which had no place for Clay.

It was a strange record. Apparently Tyler had been all over the lot. As to the Bank, he was its opponent from his youth as unconstitutional; yet he did not follow Jackson in his arbitrariness towards it; and he was now made president by a party that designed to restore it. As to protective tariff, he had voted against it and for it. As to slavery, he took extremest ground against the government's right of interference in the territories; yet he opposed his colleagues in their gagging of anti-slavery petitions. As to nullification, he denounced the doctrine as unconstitutional; he denounced Jackson's proceedings against it; he had once accepted a nomination from a party of nullifiers; and now he owed his position to the fact that he could and did swing the old nullifiers to a support of the Whig ticket.

Yet in all this Tyler had not been of easy principles. He had not trained wholly with either party, but he had pursued an independent course, holding invariably to strict construction and voting as he believed occasion demanded without regard to the appearance of his record. He was vain in his independence, although more than once it had shown the

close and over intense view of a small man rather than the large perspective of a statesman. This mugwump course, to use a modern phrase, made him a very uncertain quantity when he came to be the head of his own administration, and the Whigs naturally got little satisfaction when they tried to make a forecast from his past.

The address to the country which he put forth on April 9th was read with fervid interest. But though most fair spoken, it lacked the certain notes which were desired. It contained the new President's pledge that he would continue the policy of Harrison which Harrison himself had never told. He called himself a Whig in the fullest sense of the term. He asserted that he was against proscriptive removals from office on the one hand, and the partisan service of office-holders on the other. He declared that "If any war has existed between the government and commerce it shall cease." And he promised to sanction any constitutional measure of Congress which aimed at the restoration of a sound circulating medium.

This last assurance was gratifying. Still, the very opening sentences of the address gave an alarming suggestion that Tyler, as well as the Whigs, saw trouble brewing. "The spirit of faction," he said, "which is directly opposed to the spirit of a lofty patriotism may find in this (that he was the first vice-president who had attained to the presidency) occasion for assaults upon my administration. And in succeeding, under circumstances so sudden and unexpected and responsibilities so greatly augmented, to the administration of public affairs, I shall place in the intelligence and patriotism of the people my only sure reliance." Although Clay expressed in

public a buoyant hope that the Whigs would now carry through their programme, he declared in a letter that his hope was mixed with fears.

Congress assembled in its extra session on May 31. It had a comfortable Whig majority in both Houses; the Senate stood 28 Whigs to 23 Democrats; the House, 133 Whigs to 108 Democrats. The President's message was laid before Congress on the 1st of June. He seemed to say much and yet he proposed no affirmative plan of fiscal policy. He spoke freely of the people's condemnation, in the late election, of the sub-treasury system, and yet pointed out that they had not concurred in a new system. The immediate representatives of the people would doubtless be better informed than he as to the popular wish. "To you, then," he said, "who have come more directly from the body of our common constituents, I submit the entire question, as best qualified to give a full exposition of their wishes and opinions."

Then he added a hint of an expected antagonism: "I shall be ready to concur with you in the adoption of such a system as you may propose, reserving to myself the ultimate power of rejecting any measure which may, in my view of it, conflict with the Constitution, or otherwise jeopard the prosperity of the country—a power which I could not part with even if I would, but which I will not believe any act of yours will call into requisition." This threat of the ready veto was far enough from Harrison's promise to the people that the executive invasion of legislative freedom, so hated in Jackson, should be minimized in his administration.

The first deed of Congress, however, went well. It was the repeal of the sub-treasury act, which was instantly signed by the President. The next step

was to put a Bank in the place of the sub-treasury. The President's early and continued battle against the old Bank was not a reason, many hoped, why he would disregard what the Whigs now said was the wish of the people. On the other hand, they knew that he had his old misgivings as to the constitutionality of establishing branch banks in the different States without the express consent of those States. They might therefore have constructed a Bank plan which would have made it easy for him to approve.

But Clay had no thought of softening his pet scheme on account of the scruples of the President. True, he yielded so far to the presidential preference as to locate the Bank in Washington, where government had undisputed power to do anything; but the branch banks he proposed to establish in any State whose legislature did not expressly forbid its establishment; and even if the interests of the country seemed to require it, a branch bank might be established in the face of a State's refusal.

Clay pushed the measure through both Houses. The Senate passed it by a bare majority, and in the House several Whigs voted against it. It was a high display of Clay's leadership of men. He had persuaded himself that the election had proved the people's eager support of his views regarding the re-establishment of a Bank of the United States. Others were not so sure of it. Secretary Ewing had in the campaign resented the Democratic accusation that the Bank was a leading Whig doctrine. But Clay had fastened the idea upon the triumphant Whigs, and in his confidence he had once said, "Tyler dares not resist—I'll drive him before me."

But Tyler did resist. On the 16th of August he

returned the bill with his veto. His objection chiefly was that the measure forced the branch banks upon the States.

The veto did not surprise Congress, angry as were the Whig denunciations of it. During the months of that summer session, the factions had drawn apart. The Whigs had exercised little consideration for the suspected President and had freely uttered their derogatory opinions. He had been already called a renegade by a few. Others had spoken of him as a silly schoolboy. Tyler had given occasion for much of this animadversion. He began at the start to work up his boom, to use a later phrase, for the election of 1844. He had let himself talk without bridle to the wrong men. He had a mean coterie about him, dubbed naturally his "kitchen cabinet." He was giving and promising office for supporters. Instead of trying to win the Whigs to his side, he had permitted himself to be petulant at the attacks of individuals, and was cavalier to the party. Had he been a man of moral courage he would have stood by principles and not regarded the unpleasant personalities. But he was a man of vanity, and his sensitiveness to attack and suspicion and contempt led him to a course wherein he could admire himself as a martyr, but a course that was wrong of head and of heart. The Democrats were elated at the situation and were busily widening the breach. Tyler's vanity did not let him see that their natural revulsion at a man who had once deserted them and now was deserting their enemies would never permit them to give him honour.

As soon as Congress received the veto of the Bank bill, negotiations were opened with the President to find what kind of bill he would sign. A senator and

a representative had a long conference with him on the 18th of August, and directly afterwards he discussed the matter with his cabinet. The result was another conference between the two congressmen on the one side, and Webster and Ewing representing the President; and a compromise measure was prepared which Tyler agreed to sign. There was a little latitude for differences in this measure, which the President afterwards declared had been magnified. But if the measure did not completely fulfill his requirements, it came very near to them. The real trouble was that the irritated President now hated to approve any bill whatever that established a thing called a Bank. He wanted it postponed to the next session. He said he would rather cut off his hand than sign it.

The new "Fiscal Corporation" bill provided for an institution in which discounts and loans were forbidden, the business of which was to collect, keep, and disburse the money belonging to the United States, and to deal in exchanges. In deference to Tyler's scruples, the title "bank" did not attach to this fiscal corporation. The measure was rushed through Congress, but in a few days, on September 9, the President returned it with his veto. He criticised some of its provisions, and intimated that he would not sign a bill incorporating a National Bank in any form.

This second veto was not really a surprise to the Whig leaders. Adams, in his diary, said on the day the bill passed the Senate that it was certain to be vetoed by the President. Nevertheless, the Whig uproar of execration was deafening. Immediately, on Saturday, September 11, five members of the cabinet resigned. Their letters of resignation gave

their ground to be the President's lack of uprightness in the late transaction in which he had involved them. They considered his course to be one of wanton deception and gross dishonour—a breach of plain faith with both Congress and cabinet. Webster did not resign. He wanted to hold on, and his unfinished business with England was accepted by the Whigs as reason for his remaining. The following Monday, just as Congress was about to adjourn, Tyler sent in nominations for the vacant cabinet places, which the Senate confirmed.

The Whigs of Congress united in a scathing manifesto to the country, in which they set forth the President's perfidy to his party and his befooling breach of faith with Congress. The address also proclaimed a complete divorce between Tyler and the Whig party because he had opposed its Bank policy which the people had entrusted to it. Further, the paper condemned not only the recent use of the veto power, but its unrestrained possibility as a menace to the will of the people.

Thus, in six months from the tumultuous triumph of the Whig entrance into power, a disruption had fully come. The Democrats were as delighted as boys at the unexpected opportunity that had come their way. The Whigs were blind with rage at being a powerless majority without a future. And Tyler, surrounded by a little group of adventurers, was intriguing for two more administrations after this one. The position of each of the three was pitiful for its lack of dignity. That of the President was the worst, on account of its disingenuousness and of its hopelessness to all but himself. As Clay had gathered up discontented Democrats enough to make the Whig party, Tyler believed he could gather more

Democrats, and, with Webster's help on the old-line Whig side, make a still greater party. But Clay must be destroyed first. When the cabinet resigned, Webster said, "And where shall I go?" "That depends entirely upon yourself, Mr. Webster," replied the President. "Then," said Webster eagerly, "If you leave it to me I will stay where I am." "Give me your hand on that," exclaimed Tyler, going over to where Webster sat with extended hand; "and now I say to you that Henry Clay is a doomed man from this hour." For this he had played his game of childish subterfuge which less devious minds called lies. Over-sensitive in mental processes, as well as in temper, he got his eyes so close to all the troubling problems that he could not see them in their relations; once more he lacked the perspective which makes a man competent. Nevertheless, Tyler had won a victory and Clay had met a defeat which neither of them comprehended at the time. The Bank, which had been their pawn, was beaten once and for all. The Whigs never revived the issue again.

In the Congress which met in December, 1841, the triangular fight went on. The session lasted nearly nine months, but little was done beyond the enactment of a new tariff law, called the Tariff of 1842.

The national finances had grown steadily worse. Van Buren left behind him a deficit of $11,000,000. The extra session of 1841 had covered this by a three years' loan. But the repute of American government was too poor just now for this short loan to find enough takers. So Congress in January had to issue $5,000,000 of treasury notes, and also had to increase the loan by $5,000,000 more. The Presi-

dent proposed an Exchequer bill, to take the place of the dead Bank scheme, but Congress treated it with contempt. Meantime government had not enough money to pay its bills. Its officials and the army and navy were unable to get all their pay. European capitalists were calling the Americans a bankrupt people. Something had to be done at once. Yet the summer of 1842 came before the tariff was revised and an adequate income provided.

The delay over a new tariff was because that subject was much involved with certain other questions which seem trifling at this distance compared with the need of providing government with enough money to pay its bills. But the mental confusion was very great. There was first the Whig doctrine, dearly loved, of distributing the product of the sales of public lands to the individual States. Common sense might argue that it was better to use these few millions to pay the Federal bills. But the doctrine was entrenched. The Whigs would not hear of its diversion to pay bills. The Democrats, State-righters though they were, opposed giving it to the States. For aside from constitutional arguments, the case stood thus: give the land money to the States, and the tariff has to be increased; use the land money to pay the bills, and the tariff may be low. This see-saw question was now very pertinent. For not only was government so short of funds that it was borrowing with one hand while it was donating prodigal *douceurs* to the States with the other, but also it was now almost on a free trade basis, on account of the automatic lowering of import rates under the Compromise Tariff of 1833.

The matter was made thicker by the question of State repudiations. Several States were bankrupt

and were defaulting, and were passing acts that looked towards repudiation. Mississippi was the worst, but Michigan, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, and even Pennsylvania were in the mire. Europe was getting interested in how the separate States could be made to pay, and the discouragement of American business men was paralysing. Various remedies were suggested. Adams said the States should be forced to pay. Others proposed the Hamiltonian plan of the Union assuming the State debts. In this situation the distribution of the land money seemed more helpful than ever before, and the Whigs were unwilling to surrender the custom.

So it was a long strain before the Whig tariff bill was ready. When it came it had its rider of land-money distribution. It ran some of the rates up as high as forty per cent. while the Democrats wanted only twenty per cent. maximum. Two tariff bills were prepared; one was provisional, to act as a bridge to the other which was to be the permanent law. The President promptly vetoed the first. Congress then challenged another veto by passing the second, and the President accepted the challenge and sent it back quicker than the first.

Notwithstanding the tremendous outcry at this use of the veto power, the vetoes had been expected. The position of the President regarding the distribution clause in the bill was known beforehand. In the past he had favoured tariff and had favoured distribution, but he chose to disapprove of their being put together. Whether this opinion was entitled to academic respect or not, it was the announced opinion of the man who had the vetoes. The Whigs knew that the bills could never muster the two-thirds vote necessary to pass over the veto. Hence they showed

poor strategy and shortsighted statesmanship in doing the ugly act on a bare majority.

They fancied, however, that they could make the President wilt under the storm. They thought Tyler might be forced to resign, as he had done once before when he left the Senate because he was at variance with his State legislature. Impeachment was proposed, but the leaders dared not risk the chance of failure. A severe resolution of censure, however, was prepared by Adams, in which all of Tyler's political sins against Congress were rehearsed. The last veto was stamped as especially heinous, since it struck at the government's need of revenue and the right of Congress to raise it. Not even the worst tyrants of England, it was said, had dared dictate to Parliament how the revenue should be raised.

But Tyler's courage did not fail him. He scorned the suggestion of resigning; he was in no danger of impeachment, as the two-thirds vote could not be obtained in the Senate. He sent to the House a formal protest against its censure, and thus filled full the resemblance of his case to Jackson's; only he had once resigned when instructed to expunge the Jackson censure. He was right in believing that Congress would not dare adjourn without providing a revenue, for the people would not tolerate that. Congress yielded; a tariff bill was passed which omitted the offensive distribution rider. This, the Tariff of 1842, the President signed, and Congress adjourned.

The Whigs' majority was thus a second time defeated. Their own President had knocked out their Bank and their Distribution. Moreover, the autumn elections of 1842 turned their majority of 25 into a

minority of 61. But Tyler's triumphs over his old friends were of infinite cost to himself.

The Ashburton Treaty with England makes a brighter spot in the career of this administration. The honour for this treaty is divided between Webster and the President. There had been a piling-up of differences between the two countries—the boundary between Canada and the United States; a quarrel over a steamer in the Niagara river; the rendition of a cargo of slaves who had mutinied on an American coaster and had steered for a British port; and the British custom of searching any vessel suspected of being a slave trader. At one time the prospect looked almost dark enough for war, and some of the Southerners would have welcomed it as an occasion for breaking up the Union. But Lord Ashburton and Mr. Webster spent the summer of 1843 together in Washington, informally conversing in a hunt for a compromise. Mr. Tyler's graceful manners and courtesy went a long way in keeping the situation easy until an agreement was reached. This agreement passed over the Northwestern boundary till another time, but settled happily the Northeastern boundary; it passed over the two ship disputes, but made provision for the cruisers of both countries to work in harmony for the suppression of slave traders from Africa. The question of search was omitted, but England as a matter of fact abandoned her pretensions. This treaty was better than had been anticipated. The Senate ratified it promptly.

During the Tyler administration slavery grew very sensibly as a root of bitterness between North and South. The slave owners' attachment to slavery had

become a madness. They saw in the steadily growing Northern revulsion against slavery a menace to what they now held as dear as their own liberty. They did not merely want to be let alone. They were in hot resentment at the Northern insult of pronouncing slavery an abomination of barbarism. The aid given by abolitionists to fugitive slaves to escape into the North by the "underground railway" which saved thousands of daring negroes, and the refusals now and then of Northern governors to render up certain individuals demanded by Southern governors, was a source of frenzy to Southerners. They raved in their press; they mobbed Northern visitors; they flourished pistols and knives in Congress.

One day John Quincy Adams presented a petition from citizens of Haverhill, Massachusetts, praying for a dissolution of the Union on the ground of the irreconcilable differences between North and South. Adams's own condemnation of the idea in the petition did not prevent the furious slave-barons from proposing a formal and scathing censure from the House against him for even mentioning the word which the South had been tossing about for years. Though now an enfeebled old man, Adams fought back his banded accusers for days with pitiless arguments and documents which proved unanswerably the disloyalty of the slave-statesmen, until they were glad to purchase his silence by admitting their own defeat. Shortly after this, Giddings, of Ohio, brought in resolutions regarding the case of the slaves who, while being carried in a ship from Virginia to New Orleans, had overpowered their keepers and had escaped to British territory. These resolutions declared that since slavery was an abridgment of a natural right by municipal law, this law did not hold

on the high seas; and that therefore the slaves in killing a keeper in their effort for liberty were not guilty of murder. The Southern storm burst upon Giddings, and he was censured by the House for expressing such an idea. Only half of the Northern representatives dared support him; a third of them voted with the South. But the people took up this cowardly branding of a man for free speech in Congress. Giddings resigned his seat, but was returned immediately by an immense vote of his constituents. The South was beaten again, and began to see that its gag rule would not work.

But as the slave-barons became convinced that they could not repress free speech in Congress, they looked for relief in the acquisition of Texas. This was south of the Missouri Compromise Line, and could be carved into several new slave States, with adequate representation in Congress to turn the scale of power. Calhoun was the real leader in the propaganda calling for the annexation of Texas, but President Tyler resolved to make it his own special policy. Calhoun argued frankly and openly that the continued existence of slavery in the United States required that Texas come in, and that if the admission was postponed, Great Britain would gain the abolition of slavery in Texas. To the Northerners he pointed out the dangers to our country if Great Britain should succeed in gaining Texas, with its possible reach to the Pacific on the West and Oregon on the North. But, immeasurable as would be the national calamity if that vast and unbroken section became British, the North dreaded more the certainty of the slave triumph if Texas became American.

Alarmed at the growing boldness of the Texas talk in Congress, Adams and a dozen more Whigs issued

in March, 1843, a manifesto to the Northern people announcing the Southern purpose. It was generally discredited, however, as the fright of alarmists. Had not annexation been voted down in Congress just now (1842) by an overwhelming majority?

But the President was stirring up the old dispute with Mexico over the spoliation claims by increased demands. He had obtained an increase of the navy, and one day Commodore Jones, claiming to have heard that the British had taken California, sailed into Monterey and took possession for a day, until he learned his mistake. Mexico had practically ceased her war upon Texas, and at last offered to recognise her independence if she would not join the United States. To the United States Mexico said that any act looking to annexation would be a cause for war. Tyler, however, continued his secret negotiations with Texas, and by cajolery and by threats prevailed upon President Houston to send an agent to Washington to construct a treaty of annexation. In December, 1843, Tyler's message to Congress discussed with spirit Mexico's threat of war in case of annexation, but did not betray the fact that a Texan plenipotentiary was in Washington at work upon a treaty.

In March, 1844, Calhoun became Secretary of State. He was a vast accession to Tyler's discredited prestige, and had consented to the association only in order to consummate his great ambition as to Texas. Ships and troops were stationed so as to preclude a Mexican invasion of Texas when the treaty should be made. But meantime the story of these secret proceedings got out, and the public in the North was in consternation. Matters were hastened, and the President submitted the new treaty to the Senate in April, 1844. But the time was not yet ripe, and

instead of two thirds for it there were two thirds against it.

But it was now before the people, and the presidential campaign was on. It was the chief question of the campaign, and when, in November, the election of Polk on the frank programme of annexation expressed the decision of a majority of the people, the treaty was again taken up at the December session of Congress. All the winter it was discussed. In February a revolution in Mexico seemed to tie the hands of that Republic. Immediately the treaty was passed by a joint resolution, and it received the President's signature three days before his term closed.

Tyler had at last vindicated his policy by success. Though he was not to be president again the victory was his. He had worked the secret conspiracy against Mexico for over two years. The proud South had disregarded every claim of Mexico to national courtesy. The disputed boundaries of Texas were left for another chapter, with the certainty of a territorial war. The slave owners had recovered the balance of power, and slavery was to be in every new State carved out of Texas as far north as the Missouri Compromise line.

Texas was Tyler's gift to the South. Disavowed by the Whigs, not accepted by the Democrats, he had remained true to the South. As Jefferson had given to his country the vast central domain of the Louisiana Purchase, Tyler was to be remembered as having obtained in the interest of his own section another vast empire which would be forced through to the Pacific. That he, rather than his successor, might have the glory of the first great act, on the day before he left office he despatched a messenger to Texas to obtain her ratification.

But the most dramatic feature of this Texas business during Tyler's term, was the tragic defeat wrought by it upon his enemy, Henry Clay.

It had been nicely arranged between Clay and Van Buren that they were to run against each other for the presidency in 1844. They had apparently agreed upon the issues that they would contest, and Texas was to be left out. Neither wanted to touch it. Texas was a firebrand to the North; none knew what it might do. But their plans were upset by Tyler's presenting the annexation treaty to the Senate in the spring of 1844. Texas became at once the issue that must be fought out.

The nomination of Clay was a foregone conclusion. Never had he been so popular as when he resigned from the Senate, in 1842, amid a scene in which his enemies vied with his friends to show him honour, and even Calhoun, his bitterest foe, took him in his arms. From Ashland, his home, he had conducted his canvass, and when the Baltimore Whig convention opened, May 1, 1844, there was no other name but Harry Clay. The great party was resolved to atone to him for its disloyalty of four years before. It comprised the best intellects of the nation, and they honoured themselves by their determination that this peerless statesman should at last have the presidency. Other American statesmen have surpassed him in particulars, but none has equalled him in a round combination of great qualities.

Four days before this convention a peculiar coincidence happened. Letters appeared from both Clay and Van Buren opposing the immediate annexation of Texas. To the great majority of Whigs this sentiment was agreeable, and it enhanced the enthusiasm with which the convention unanimously nominated

Clay. Frelinghuysen, a staunch and trusty Whig, was named for vice-president. The platform, which was Clay's own, gave no mention to Texas, nor to the Bank either, by name; it advocated Clay's general views on national currency, the tariff, the distribution of land money; and it condemned the Executive's usurpation of the legislative in the veto.

The Southern Democrats were not pleased by Van Buren's Texas letter, and when their convention met at Baltimore, on May 26, although he led the voting for seven ballots he could not get the two-thirds. Then a "dark horse" appeared in James K. Polk, of Tennessee, who believed first and last in annexation, and he was suddenly nominated, with Dallas, of Pennsylvania, for the second place. The platform approved of the veto power in so far as it had overthrown the Bank; it disapproved of land distribution, and it came out flatly for the taking of both Texas and Oregon.

The same day, another Baltimore convention of Tyler's office-holders nominated him; but he soon withdrew. There was still another small convention whose might was to prove prodigious in that campaign. It was that of the Liberty party; it had met in Buffalo in August, 1843, and nominated James G. Birney again. Its platform was against slavery, root and branch, and it considered Texas as slavery's latest crime.

As the campaign progressed, Texas was the great issue. Clay's anti-annexation letter had hurt him in the South, and he yielded to his impulse to explain things and wrote another and another. In one he said that if annexation could be accomplished without dishonour, without war, and with the common consent of the Union, he "should be glad to see it."

This did not help him at the South, for Polk was for annexation without conditions. But it killed him at the North. The Liberty party cried: "We told you so—Clay will be glad to see it!" Birney said to doubters, "If you can't vote for me, vote against Clay, for he is a wolf in sheep's clothing,—and with his intellect will hurt anti-slavery more than Polk who is stupid." The Whig canvass, which began with joyous confidence and noise, became defensive in the North; it had to explain Clay's letters. But the Whig defections to the Liberty party went on, while the Democrats closed up their ranks and shouted for Texas.

The election turned on New York. There, out of 500,000 votes, Polk had a majority of 5,000; but Birney polled 16,000, most of them drawn from the Whigs; and it was here that Clay lost New York, and with New York the nation. This was Clay's heart-breaking defeat. He accepted it serenely, but it snapped his nerve. No one had been to blame but himself. He had been misunderstood; but Polk had not written fatal letters. The Abolitionists had precipitated Texas and the war, which might have been averted had they not defeated Clay; but Clay made the strategic blunder of losing the North, which was his, by trying to appease the South, which he could never gain. Tyler had again worked defeat upon the man who would have overborne him. In the issue of the Bank, the land-money distribution, and Texas, Tyler had been on the side of fate, and Clay had erred. Yet in the retrospect, it is Tyler that is disregarded, and Clay is forgiven for his blunders.

An advantageous foreign treaty, engineered by Tyler, was that with China. His minister, Caleb Cushing, returned from his mission to the mysterious

empire in January, 1845, with a treaty which the Senate unanimously ratified.

Tyler was also fortunate in going out of office with a balance of $8,000,000 in the Treasury, whereas he had entered with a deficit of $11,000,000. That, however, was due not to his foresight but to the protective tariff, which had raised the income and had brought prosperity to American industries. Under this stimulus the North was making money for the nation with mills that ran night and day, and had increased the buying value of every dollar. The South, too, was loaded with money. Her cotton was King throughout the world. But hers was a one-sided growth in wealth. Slavery was in reality her economic curse, as the war of twenty years later was to prove.

Mr. Tyler left Washington immediately after the inauguration of Mr. Polk, and retired to his estate near Greenway, Virginia. Here he brought his beautiful bride, and the next twenty years of his life were of peace and honour. Though unsupported by the Democrats in his ambition to be president, he received from Virginia after his retirement an abundant appreciation. In 1861, when South Carolina had seceded, Virginia, at Mr. Tyler's proposal, called a Union convention of representatives from the States to meet at Washington to seek a plan for compromise. He was made the chairman of that famous convention which had essayed the impossible. When it failed, just before Sumter was fired upon, he returned to be elected a Confederate legislator. But before he took his seat, in 1862, he died, while his State was trembling under the tread of armies in the conflict he had done much to hasten.

An estimate of Mr. Tyler's versatile character

would be intensely interesting if history could make the man himself interesting. He had distinguished gifts, but he was an insignificant man among the statesmen of his time. He had a keen if fanciful political conscience, but was too self-conscious in his devotion to its separate experiences to be a man of steadfast political principles. The result was an instability amounting at times to volatileness, and this made him despised. He had a penetrating instinct for the side that would win to-morrow: the next day after might take care of itself. He was a man of attractive address, affable, and high-bred, and his gentleness smoothed out many a hard interview. But he had none of the greater magnetism that awakens trust and makes leadership. As a private landed gentleman and as a senator, he wore a lustre. But in the eminent place where fate threw him he seems in backward look a man of frivolity and mischief.

PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK.

(ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1845-1849.)

CHAPTER XX.

AN EXPANSIONIST PRESIDENT.

WHEN, on the Fourth of March, 1845, President-elect Polk, accompanied by Mr. Tyler, rode up Pennsylvania Avenue through the rain to his inauguration, men felt that a new epoch was opening. President Tyler had opened the way into a strange and daring course, and the new President was to lead the country into it.

The country had already grown with a rapidity that was as bewildering to itself as it was to Europe. When Jefferson was inaugurated there were only 5,000,000 people in the United States. Polk was elected as president of 20,000,000. In 1801 the area of the sixteen States was 424,500 square miles. Now, in 1845, with the new State of Florida, the twenty-seven States included 1,357,000 square miles, and the Territories some 600,000 square miles more.

When Jefferson was inaugurated, the congressmen from Massachusetts and Georgia required weeks to reach the capital on horseback. Of the people, none but the rich or the adventurous ever went be-

yond their own States; and the ideas held of one another by the different sections were crude and often fanciful. Now, good roads stretched everywhere and good wagons were on them. Steamboats ran along the coast and were on all the navigable rivers. The railroad had begun. The Erie Canal connected the chain of Great Lakes with the ocean. The post-office was well organized and connected every village with the world. The newspapers now gave news, and collected it from any point where the mail went. And, greatest of all, the telegraph had just come, and the first real business that the first line did was to tick out the news of Polk's nomination in the Capitol before throngs of congressmen. With mills at every waterfall in the North, and with coal lately discovered which would run mills anywhere; with commerce and exchange regulated; with villages turning to cities, and cities becoming pretentious; with books multiplying; with a real school of American authors; with education already universal, at least in the North,—it was a people of a miraculous development who had elected Polk to the presidency.

During his four years he was not only to conduct a spirited foreign war, but he was to add an empire of territory to the nation's domain; an area one third larger than that of the sixteen States in 1801; an area nearly as large as that of the whole twenty-seven States on the day when he took his oath of office,—a new realm of over a million square miles.

This was to be because the Anglo-Saxon land-hunger of the nation had been excited. It had been as yet undemanding, for the incomprehensible sweep of untouched and unknown prairies beyond the farthest settlements had been enough for the roving imagi-

nation. But stories had begun to come from daring explorers of the fertility and beauty beyond the Rocky Mountains. The exploits of young Lieutenant Frémont (who had made a runaway marriage with Senator Benton's daughter and who was to be a presidential candidate), as he made a vast circular path through the unknown from California east to Salt Lake, then north, then west, and then south again, excited many adventurous spirits. The growing interest England was taking in the Pacific coast drew popular thought to it. American wagon trains were already undertaking the six months' journey over the Rockies, and some of them were getting there. These trains carried over that terrible course the hungry imagination of the people who stayed at home. Accordingly, when the Democratic platform of 1844 boldly declared for the re-annexation of Oregon and Texas, it appealed to the racial land-passion which was just ready to be aroused. Oregon, Americans believed, was rightfully ours anyway; and with the Texas territory reaching out indefinitely westward, the mind easily imagined the whole Pacific coast becoming American.

The awakening of this appetite was due to the most artful campaign cunning ever carried out in the United States. It was the cool programme of the planters. They too, of course, were tickled by the vision of the entire Western coast under the flag. But to them this was subservient to the want of new slave States. They cared little for Oregon, but they cared infinitely for all the new Southern territory attainable by fair means or otherwise, where slavery could extend. They regarded the bleak Oregon lands as unpromising for new free States, but they

imagined a mighty group of States, tropical in fertility, to be made between the eastern line of Texas and San Francisco Bay.

These new slave States the slave-holders must have or be eventually beaten by the free States. From the very beginning of the Federal government, the aim had been to keep the two sections balanced. Consequently, the new States had thus far come in twos, one free and one slave. They did not come in simultaneous pairs, but always with the idea of keeping the division equal. The first Thirteen had been seven free and six slave; so one extra slave State was thrown in when Tennessee was admitted in 1796. But aside from that the pairs were as follows: Vermont and Kentucky; Ohio and Louisiana; Indiana and Mississippi; Illinois and Alabama; Maine and Missouri; Arkansas and Michigan. Now Florida came, March 3, 1845, and Iowa was soon to be its match. In 1844 the Senate was exactly even, 26 to 26. This was enough for much that the South wanted. The Senate having the sole confirming power, a tie vote gave to the solid South the means of controlling all the Federal appointments, including judges and foreign ministers. Mr. Webster remarked: "Up to this time the South has had three fourths of all the Federal offices of emolument and power." But in the House there was a disparity. Population grew far faster in the free States. And in 1844 there were 135 representatives from the free States to 98 from the slave. Population was the one thing in the North that the arrogance of slavery could not affect, and it was destined to send more and more representatives to Congress, until at the moment of secession the ratio was to be 147 to 90.

But there seemed to the planters no reason why

both Houses might not be made predominantly Southern by the Texas expansion. The Oregon scheme, therefore, was prepared to hide the Texas conspiracy. It was a preposterous claim that the United States had a right up to 54° 40′, the Russian or Alaskan line, and it would mean war with England. None knew this better than the Southern cabal, and they never intended to contest for more than the 49th parallel. But the campaign cry of "Fifty-four-Forty or Fight" was good for firing the land-lust of the Northern race, and to make them willing that the South should have their slice also. The Northern Democrats fell into the trap completely, and many Whigs felt their blood tingle at the thought of that unmeasured coast under the stars and stripes. The control of the Pacific was the manifest destiny of the United States, and "manifest destiny" became the purple phrase that pleased men's imaginations in 1844.

To carry out this rough-shod plan, President Polk was admirably fitted. One of the characteristics that had appealed much to the virtuous in the North was his unbending Presbyterianism, which was in reassuring contrast to Henry Clay's well-known frailties. He was of that grim religious temper that makes a man of peace pitiless in smiting the unrighteous, hip and thigh. Such men readily conceive themselves the Lord's chosen vessels, and then they are not too much handicapped by sensitiveness. Let such a man accept the premises that slavery is a divine institution, beneficent to both races, and he has no place for weak scruples in carrying out the work needful in establishing it.

James Knox Polk was born a North Carolinian, but while he was still a young boy his family moved

across the Alleghanies, seeking a home in the new State of Tennessee. His father, Samuel Polk, was a descendant from Robert Polk, or Pollock, an early Irish emigrant. His mother was Jane Knox, the daughter of a Revolutionary captain in North Carolina. The boy James grew up in the new but rich valley farm, where he helped his father not only at the farming but also in his long expeditions as surveyor. He had an aptitude for mathematics, but he liked all study, and early began to be a general reader. On account of ill health his parents took his away from books and put him under a merchant's tuition.

Young Polk was thoroughly unhappy at the new work and soon got leave to be at home again, now bound to pursue his education for which he was allowed a private tutor. There was good determination in the young man who entered the second class at the University of North Carolina at twenty, about the age when most students of that day left college. But he went out of the institution three years later acknowledged to be its best classicist and mathematician, whereof his friends saw the proof when he pronounced the Latin salutatory.

He next studied law, as a matter of course with ambitious young Southerners, and set up his office at Columbia, his county seat. Lawyers who were both well educated and industrious were rare in that new section. Something distinguished this practitioner, for he was at once successful and became a well-known advocate throughout the State, practising both alone and with leaders at the bar. While he was still studying he got acquainted in some way with that maker and unmaker of men, Andrew Jackson,

shortly before he was made governor of the Territory of Florida.

As another matter of course, the young lawyer was soon speaking in public on political topics. He had a popular style and was wanted widely for stump speeches. He spoke in a plain, business-like fashion, and convincingly, without the turgid rhetoric of the times. He soon got the chief clerkship of the Tennessee legislature, and in 1823 he was elected to that body. He promised well, being sharp in debate, tactful in legislative business, as well as a steady worker and a man of force. He set himself to get a law passed against duelling, which was a courageous stand for a young man to take in that part of the country.

Two years of this, and his district promoted him to Congress. Beginning in 1825, at thirty years of age, one of the youngest members in the House, he was elected seven times in succession. Upon entering, he at once joined the opposition to the administration of John Quincy Adams, and was one of the extreme opponents. He was a firm supporter of Andrew Jackson, and naturally during his eight years' reign came prominently to the front. He was Speaker during the Twenty-Fourth Congress, the last of Jackson's presidency, and also during the Twenty-Fifth Congress.

His maiden speech defended the proposed amendment to the Constitution, giving the choice of president and vice-president directly to the people. He strongly opposed the Panama mission. As chairman of a select committee, he made a report denying the constitutional right of government to collect from the people for distribution a surplus beyond the needs of the government. In 1833 he made a minority

report from the Ways and Means committee against the Bank; during the fight after the removal of the deposits, as chairman of the committee, he stood by President Jackson.

Polk supported the administration of Van Buren with unwavering partisanship, approving and aiding all the administrative measures. When the case of Samuel Swartwout, the defaulting collector of customs for the port of New York, came up for investigation, the usual duty of appointing the committee was not entrusted to the Speaker, but was assumed by the House itself. This was a severe reflection upon Polk's fair-mindedness. Party feelings ran high during the sessions over which he presided, and many appeals were taken from his rulings, in which he was uniformly sustained by his majority.

The partisan quality of Polk's service as Speaker is signalised by the fact that when he left the chair not a Whig member would move the customary vote of thanks, this act of courtesy usually coming from one of the opposite party. Prentiss, of Mississippi, asserted that the Speaker had not been impartial. He had been instead "the tool of the Executive, the tool of his party." He declared that he was "not willing to give to Mr. Polk a certificate of good behaviour, to aid him in his canvass for the governorship of Tennessee. . . . This vote of thanks was to be used as so much capital, on which to do political business," and he "was not disposed to furnish it." The House was brought to vote upon the resolution, which a Democratic member had been obliged to present, only by the use of the previous question. The Whigs added to the insult by calling for the *ayes* and *noes*. The vote of the Whigs was solid against the resolution, John Quincy Adams

heading the roll. In this embarrassing situation the Speaker remained self-possessed, showing "a magnificent contempt for the discourtesy of the Whigs." He thanked the "majority of the House" for their vote, "as of infinitely more value than the common, matter-of-fact, customary resolution, which, in the courtesy usually prevailing in parliamentary bodies, is passed at the close of their deliberations."

Beyond the narrow firmness of a partisan, Polk's fourteen years in Congress are colourless. His career was honourable from a business point of view, however, since he had despatch, industry, and ability to arrive in affairs.

In the Tennessee contest for governor, which followed Polk's withdrawal from Congress, the course of the Whigs in the House aided his election. Their refusal to join in the resolution of thanks was considered to have been a spiteful insult. Jackson, at the Hermitage, took affront, and had an angry interest in the victory of Polk over his persecutors. It has been argued that the whole affair made him known as a friend of Jackson, and hence available as a candidate against Van Buren in 1844. To his last days Jackson, when he assumed a friend's cause, was dangerous to deal with.

As governor, Polk declared himself against a National Bank, against taxation for surplus revenue, and against abolition agitation. In 1841 he was defeated for governor in the general Whig whirlwind, and again in 1843.

In 1844, when Tyler's policy changed political platforms, and the trimming agreement of Van Buren and Clay was inadequate to meet the demands of the annexationists, Polk spoke out with a decision that carried. As a probable candidate for vice-president,

he was asked to state his views at this crisis. He wrote in reply, April 22, 1844: "I have no hesitation in declaring that I am in favour of the immediate reannexation of Texas to the government and territory of the United States, the title to which I regard to have been as indisputable as that to any portion of our territory." When Van Buren could not carry the necessary two-thirds vote at the Baltimore convention, this pithy avowal made Polk's name the obvious substitute.

He was an ideal candidate for that masterly campaign of the Democratic managers. Their platform was cumulative, from vagueness in the tariff (which allowed them in the North to claim as their own the high tariff of 1842, and in the South to blame the Whigs for it) up to the most decisive call for Texas and Oregon. It was this platform against Henry Clay's popularity. Nothing that Polk could do would enhance his chance against that personality. He was a man who could keep still while Clay was explaining. He was known as a partisan, but that did not hurt him. He was a slave-holder, but he was of rigid morality. He was for Texas out and out; so was the platform, and everybody knew what to expect. If war was necessary with Mexico or England, he would make a good war executive who would do the business thoroughly. Seldom have campaign doctrines appeared to have so neat a match in a candidate. The election was very close, however. Polk had a popular majority of 75,881 in a total vote of 2,698,305. He had 170 electoral votes to Clay's 105, but there has been a perennial interest in pointing out that if Clay's Texas letter had not driven off so many anti-slavery Whigs to Birney in New York, that State, which was Polk's by a bare majority,

would have gone for Clay, and that would have reversed the electoral vote to 141 for Clay to 134 for Polk.

Such was the man who took up the work which the Southern leaders had marked out for him. Tyler could not have done it, for his high ideality left him volatile. But Polk, without too much imagination, had too sound a sense of his business to be unstable in getting it done. George Bancroft, the great historian, who served for a year in this cabinet, tells that one day the new President said with emphatic force: "there are four great measures which are to be the measures of my administration: one, a reduction of the tariff; another, the independent treasury; a third, the settlement of the Oregon question; and lastly, the acquisition of California."

Not planning for a reëlection, Polk chose his cabinet with reference to the readiness coöperation to be done rather than to the pleasing of factions. James Buchanan of Pennsylvania, the Secretary of State, had already been mentioned as a candidate for president, but he retired his aspirations and came into the cabinet pledged to carry out his chief's policy, not to train for a succession. Robert J. Walker, of Mississippi, had the Treasury; an astute man of many schemes and not altogether above question, he was to be heard of again. William L. Marcy, of New York, no friend of Van Buren, and the expounder of the reasonableness of "To the victors belong the spoils," was Secretary of War." A pleasant surprise in such a cabinet is George Bancroft, the historian of his country, who had the Navy, and who was to establish the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

The tariff question was brought up in the President's first message to Congress. He boldly attacked

the protection Tariff of 1842 as a mulcting of the farmers in the interests of manufacturers; a system wherein not the people but the few employers got the profits of protection. He declared that the country needed at once a new tariff, geared for revenue only. This position was meat and drink to the South, but it excited wide anger in the North. Pennsylvania had been carried for Polk by the artful arguments of Buchanan and Dallas that a Democratic success would confirm the results of the good tariff of 1842, which they claimed the Democrats in Congress had given to the country. Polk was now a betrayer of trust. He was under British influence; for this was the time of the British conversion to free trade, and England was striving to convert the world to that millenial doctrine. It was even said that Secretary Walker had consulted with the British minister before submitting his reckless report on tariff reductions.

After the late election had swept votes into the Democratic hopper on the anti-England cry of "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight," a new and unexpected tariff, "British all over," was a chilly awakening in the North. The Democrats of Congress were ready to follow the administration, and in spite of the prospect of one war and the possibility of another, a new tariff act was passed which reduced the revenue from customs by several millions of dollars. It must be admitted that as a preliminary to an unknown but certain addition to the Federal expenditures, this was not the line of a concentration of effort. But if it was unsound business in view of the coming complications, it was necessary business to please the Southern planters. The North would probably concur when the war issue came.

When the Whigs went into power in 1841, they had promptly abolished Van Buren's independent treasury, and after the veto of their Bank, had failed to put any institution in its place. The Democratic campaign had felicitated the country that the veto power had been adequate to defeat a revival of the abominable Bank, and had commended Van Buren's financial policy. President Polk accordingly at once proposed to Congress a renewal of the independent treasury, or sub-treasury, as it was popularly called. The willing Congress was glad thus to confirm the overthrow of the Bank, and before the end of its first session, August, 1846, it reëstablished the treasury by which, ever since, government has taken full care of its own funds without the aid of any banks.

Thus two of the Democratic measures were carried during the first session of the first Congress. Even more promptly was the Oregon question settled.

What was then popularly known as the Oregon country extended from parallel 42° to 54°, 40′, west of the Rocky Mountains. Mexico had a good title up to the former parallel. Russia had a good title down to the latter. A barren land it was considered for a long time, good chiefly for trappers and traders in furs. But interest in it gradually grew. After the War of 1812, several proposals were made to decide whether the title belonged to the United States or Great Britain. Finally, in 1827, under President Adams, a convention was made whereby a provisional joint occupancy by the two nations was recognized; whenever either party wished to abrogate this convention a twelve months' notice was to be given.

As a matter of fact, the foundation of a clear title by either nation was slender. Both had been there. But the British activities had been chiefly to the

north, while the American had been naturally to the south. The 49th parallel was the boundary between British America and the United States from the Lake of the Woods as far west as the Rocky Mountains. It would seem natural, accordingly, for this line to be pushed through to the Pacific. But as that would give the Columbia river to the United States, Great Britain preferred the joint occupancy to continue.

Meantime both British and Americans were working their way over the mountains. The Hudson Bay Company pointed out to the British ministry that their traders were settling along the Columbia river, taking British laws with them. American scouts came back, after conducting trains of American settlers to the same region, and described its riches and started the beginning of a steady roll of emigration. Dr. Marcus Whitman rode horseback across the continent from Oregon to Washington to present to the government the need of an immediate settlement of the jurisdiction question.

In 1844, while the Democrats were working up the North on the campaign thunder that the United States should assert exclusive jurisdiction from 42° to 54°, 40′, the Secretary of State, Calhoun, was negotiating with Pakenham, the British minister, for a compromise settlement. Pakenham proposed 49°, which Calhoun declined, and both waited to see what the new administration would say. In 1845 Secretary Buchanan resumed the negotiations. After much argument that the American title up to 54° 40′ was good, he offered to compromise on Pakenham's previous offer of 49°. Now Pakenham declined and was rather sharp about it.

The matter then dropped until President Polk

narrated the whole diplomatic story to Congress in December, 1845. Congress eagerly took up the issue, and the House passed a resolution instructing the President to give the required twelve months' notice that the United States withdraw from the joint-occupancy agreement. The Whigs of the House outdid the Democrats in fiery speech—John Quincy Adams led them in their demand for decisive action in claiming the whole Oregon country up to 54°, 40′. The Senate, however, experienced a different spirit. Webster argued for the fairness of 49°. The Southern Democrats wanted no British complications which would interfere with the Mexican programme. So instead of the fire-eating House resolution, the Senate substituted a very amiable one, expressing a desire for a friendly settlement with Great Britain, and as a first step towards that, authorizing the President at his discretion to give the required notice of abrogation.

The British ministry was in accord with this spirit, and after a few weeks an agreement was reached which established 49° as the boundary between British Columbia and the American Oregon. The Senate and the President were glad to seal this honourable, fair, and very expedient settlement. But Northern Democrats, who had shouted for Polk as a Fifty-Four-Forty-or-Fight man, wondered what it meant. But it was not hard to guess.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WAR WITH MEXICO.

Texas, in point of time as well as of importance, was the first consideration before President Polk when he took his inaugural oath. The American messenger, bearing tidings to Texas of the American proposals of annexation, had ridden away at top speed the day before Tyler handed over the executive office to his successor. It was April 1 when this offer was laid before the President of Texas. It was not too early, for he was even then in the midst of negotiations with Mexico, encouraged by the British government. Mexico was offering to recognise Texan independence, providing that Texas would not annex herself to the United States. It was easy, however, to hold up that negotiation while this most delightful new offer was being considered. The eager Texan Congress in June, in special session, rejected the Mexican offer and accepted the American. A constitutional convention was called for August, and in October the people, with one heart, adopted a State constitution which was forwarded to Washington for acceptance. When Congress assembled in December the new Texan senators and representatives were on hand to be admitted.

Texas, no one questions, had the best right to annex herself to the United States. Mexico, also, was perfectly justified in regarding, if she chose, the part taken by the United States to be a supreme insult.

The United States knew that the action was a proper cause for war, and would unquestionably have fought Mexico if Louisiana, for instance, had declared independence and then joined the Mexican republic. Mexico withdrew her minister from Washington, but was restrained from immediate military action by a political revolution at home. During the spring of 1845, however, President Polk increased the naval squadron in the Gulf, and in May ordered General Zachary Taylor to have his troops ready to move into the disputed territory between Texas and Mexico.

In the annexation negotiations President Tyler had—intentionally, he said—kept open the question of the Texan boundary towards Mexico. There was a vast area between the river Nueces and the Rio Grande, which both claimed. Mexico said this section had not rebelled, and was peopled by Mexicans. Texas said that it was represented in the Texan Congress. Since both seemed to base their claims upon the disposition of the people in that section, it would appear to have been easy to discover that feeling, amicably. But as Tyler had kept open the old Mexican spoliation claims after they had been once settled, so now it seemed strategic to enlarge the ground of dispute by taking over Texas's quarrel as to the boundary. The larger the American demand, the easier it would be to put on the screws in acquiring the coveted territory to the ocean, either by forced sale or by war. The planters preferred the former but were ready to resort to the latter.

In conformity with this robber-baron policy, the President in July ordered General Taylor to sail from New Orleans and enter the disputed territory on the west side of the Nueces, and to hold himself in readiness there. Taylor was there with 4,000

regulars, when in his December message to Congress the President congratulated the country on the "bloodless achievement" of the annexation of Texas.

While the disputed land was thus garrisoned by Americans, the President in November sent Slidell as a special envoy to the City of Mexico to open negotiations for the matters in dispute, and with secret verbal instructions as to the getting of California. The President was a prompt business man, for Congress had not yet accepted the Texan constitution. Slidell was an interesting envoy; sixteen years later he was special envoy again, from the slave States in rebellion to Great Britain, when he was held up in mid-ocean by a too zealous Yankee captain. His Mexican mission was a failure technically, for the Mexican revolutionary government, which he expected to bribe, would not receive him at all. But, on the other hand, their refusal enabled the President to tell Congress that these contumacious people had exhausted our tolerance.

Weeks before Slidell asked for his passports, however, the President was putting on the military pressure in the disputed country. He ordered General Taylor, in January, 1846, to move his force to the east bank of the Rio Grande as far as he could go without getting into actual collision with the Mexican troops, who were on the western bank at Matamoras. If, however, the Mexicans assumed the offensive, he was to take the offensive also. By March, Taylor had taken his position directly across the river from the Mexican force, whose general challenged his presence as an invasion. A month later a reconnoitering squardon of Americans was cut to pieces by a superior Mexican force.

Then General Arista began to operate against

Taylor's communications. Taylor made a quick march to his base, and upon his return he encountered General Arista at Palo Alto. Here in a set battle, chiefly of artillery, the Mexicans were routed with large loss, on account of their inferior skill in handling their pieces. The next day Arista made another stand at Resaca de la Palma in a more advantageous position. Deep ravines lined the one road of advance, and the Mexicans commanded it with a battery loaded with grape. General Taylor's infantry crept through the ravines, and his cavalry charged gallantly up the road, sabering the gunners and driving the Mexicans over the river to Matamoras. The American loss was slight, while that of the Mexicans was nearly a quarter of the men engaged. By the middle of May, General Taylor had crossed the Rio Grande and occupied his enemy's fortifications.

Meanwhile events had moved fast in Washington. As soon as the news of the capture of the American reconnoitering party reached the capital, President Polk sent to Congress a lurid war message. He recited how his attempted negotiations with Mexico through Slidell had been insolently ignored,—but he did not tell that Slidell had been sent to bribe the revolutionary government into a cession of California. He went back to the old spoliation claims which were still unpaid,—although they were a trifle and would unquestionably have been paid when a stable government was set up. He declared that Mexican soldiery "had invaded our territory and had shed American blood on American soil"; that consequently "war existed, and notwithstanding all our efforts to prevent it, existed by the act of Mexico." But he did not name the military provocation by the Ameri-

cans, intolerable to the proper self-respect of a proud neighbour; nor did he state that the object of the administration in all its nagging of Mexico into a fight was to make an occasion for seizing California.

Congress knew this other side, both Democrats and Whigs. But one party had shaped events to this bloody spot, and the other party could not be responsible for leaving the brave little American army, led too by a Whig who might make a good presidential name, without support. Congress immediately voted an appropriation of $10,000,000 for the war, and authorised the President to call for 50,000 volunteers.

In the first excitement of the people the war seemed popular. The brilliant victories of General Taylor's well-disciplined force over superior numbers stimulated immense national fervour at first, without much regard to the cause. Enlistments were plentiful in the West, and of course in the South; but in New England there was reproach. A young poet named James Russell Lowell in the *Biglow Papers* voiced with ancient dialect the prevailing Yankee feeling against "them nigger-drivin' States," who were after "bigger pens to cram with slaves."

> "Ef ye take a sword an' dror it,
> And go stick a feller thru,
> Guv'ment ain't to answer for it,—
> God'll send the bill ter you."

was a type of the moral appeal; and the argument addressed to Private Sawin, that "Our nation's bigger'n theirn and so its rights air bigger," was a specimen of the unanswerable satire. When fighting blood is up conscience has to wait for a little; but the reaction is apt to be upsetting when it comes. On the one hand were the enthusiasts of slavery and

of expansion, with their beating drums. In the middle was another class of people who stifled their repudiation of the principles of this war under the then much quoted sentiment, "Our country, right or wrong." At the other side were conscientious Democrats and Whigs like Van Buren, King, Blair, Webster, Clay, Benton, who frankly reproached the administration for the dishonour of the war. Many like these supported it from a sense of national duty and also denounced it with unmeasured bitterness. A young officer from West Point who distinguished himself in that war, Ulysses S. Grant, wrote many years afterwards in his Memoirs: "For myself I was bitterly opposed to the measure [the annexation of Texas] and to this day I regard the war as one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation." And another man, Abraham Lincoln, whom Illinois was sending to Congress, said years later: "I was an old Whig, and whenever the Democratic party tried to get me to vote that the war had been righteously begun by the President, I would not do it. But when they asked money or land warrants, or anything to pay the soldiers, I gave the same vote that Douglas did."

While the war was thus in discussion among the people, the administration was pushing it vigorously, both by intrigue and by military plans. To subvert the Mexican government which had refused to see Slidell, the administration arranged to have the exiled Santa Anna returned from Cuba to Mexico. It hoped that his gratitude would incline him, if he succeeded in getting the leadership again, to favour the American designs. But Santa Anna, when he reëstablished himself by a counter revolution, at once began to organize an irreconcilable resistance to the

invaders. But though the government was foiled in this intrigue, the military seizure of California that same summer was successful. Commodore Sloat took possession of the sea-ports, and General Kearney marched overland by Santa Fé and occupied the territory.

In September General Taylor captured Monterey, after days of desperate resistance by its defenders, in which he himself lost heavily. He granted very generous terms to the defeated, allowing them to march away with small arms and some ammunition. For this liberality he was censured by the administration, which was glad to find somewhat against this soldier whose exploits were already making newspapers and conventions hail him as a Whig presidential candidate. The State elections of the autumn were beginning to show the Northern disapproval of the war; and in the face of these Whig successes the President was not disposed to give unlimited opportunity to the too popular Whig general.

But there were no Democratic generals to put in his place. A number of Democratic politicians were made brigadier- and major-generals directly from civil life, and it was even proposed to make Senator Benton a lieutenant-general. But military heroes could not be produced thus. The only officer who could supersede Taylor was another Whig, the ranking major-general of the army, Winfield Scott. He was a successful commander in the War of 1812, and indeed was one of the ablest officers that the country has ever had. He also was envious of Taylor, and was using every means to escape the business of staff direction in Washington and to get the chief command in Mexico.

When it became evident that a hundred days' war

would not whip the Mexicans into ceding California, plans were made for a capture of the capital city. Reluctantly the command of the great expedition was bestowed upon the Whig, General Scott. But though he had very definite ambitions for the presidency, he was esteemed less dangerous than Taylor. So it was decided to leave Taylor at the North, and to take the flower of his well-drilled army for Scott, who was to approach the capital from the sea by the same route that Cortes took.

While Scott was starting for New Orleans, December, 1846, Congress assembled again. The President's message was an ingenious special pleading in defence of the war, which the criticisms of the people certainly required. There were plenty of censorious speeches in Congress, but there was a united response to the needs of the military situation. A sum of $60,000,000 was appropriated. The navy was improved with new steam vessels. Enlistments for a five-year term were authorised. Both loans and treasury-note issues were voted. Nevertheless, Congress refused to provide for any increase in the revenue, as wisely suggested by the President. A quadrupled public debt was preferred to a present increase of taxes.

When General Scott in January took away from General Taylor his best soldiers, he left him chiefly raw levies to be used against the superior forces which Santa Anna was bringing North. But the spirited old commander, smarting under the sense of injustice, turned his limited resources to large account. On the plateau of Buena Vista he fought off the charges of Santa Anna's great army with remarkable skill. His own intrepidity imparted itself to his new regiments as he rode continuously

along the firing line, and the most gallant assaults of the Mexicans were unable to dislodge them. The next day the superb Mexican army was in full retreat, having lost over a quarter of its number.

While the American people, even the Northern Whigs, were being thrilled by this brilliant victory, —which finished making Taylor's presidential prestige, General Scott was disembarking at Vera Cruz. He had sailed with a fleet of eighty transports and an army of over 12,000 men. Scott was unsurpassed as a staff officer, and few expeditions have been better equipped than was this; few modern armies have been more eager for battle. The Americans expected to have their landing disputed, and 5,500 soldiers in ships' boats on the glassy sea at once making for the shore, formed a gallant spectacle. Those were the days when it was still the custom for soldiers to wear their dress uniforms when they went to face death in battle, and military dress had not yet lost the pomp of the Napoleonic era.

The Mexicans did not dispute the landing, but retired to the castle of Vera Cruz, where they sustained a bombardment until the big siege guns forced their capitulation. General Scott was a scientific as well as a dashing soldier, and he was too careful of the lives of his men to order the unnecessary storming assaults which his glory-hungry officers begged for. A month was now spent in perfecting the base and in pushing forward the advance, before Santa Anna was encountered. This indomitable man had brought down the shattered remnant of his army from its defeat at Buena Vista, had subdued contradiction at the capital, and had gathered a new force of nearly 12,000 soldiers, undisciplined

but spirited, to oppose the new Cortes. At Cerro Gordo, among the hills, he awaited the Americans with his army advantageously placed. But Scott's trained eye discovered one weak spot: by throwing a force in the Mexican rear he hit this spot, and soon Santa Anna's army, after a stout fight, was driven in a broken and sanguinary rout by the cheering Americans. The victors' loss was 450, but that of the defeated was much greater, and the remnant of 6,000 with which Santa Anna escaped was nearly captured.

The Mexican general had no thought of yielding. His foes at the capital, who declared him proven incompetent, were first put down, and then by pretence of opening negotiations with the Americans, he finessed for time in which to reorganise the defence. From April to August, while slow parleys were going on between Santa Anna and an agent of the American State Department, Scott was getting up reinforcements and guarding his soldiers from yellow fever. The cool, mountainous elevation where he was encamped protected the army from that dreaded scourge, and when the advance was again resumed towards the higher lands, the soldiers were in admirable form.

At the middle of August, General Scott's army had reached the volcanic elevations where they could look down upon the dream-like beauty of the City of Mexico in its green and well-watered basin. As superior in military skill and firmness to the Mexican patriots as the Spanish conquerors of three centuries before had been on this very road, they had yet to reckon with the last bitter stand of an infuriated people. Cherubusco, Chapultepec, Molino del Rey, were the names of a series of desperate fights

in sight of the city, in all of which the courage of the Mexicans and the invincible spirit of Santa Anna went down before the over-matching skill and steadiness of the invaders. After a month of this unequal struggle, the Americans entered the city as its few surviving defenders fled from it. The ancient plaza was full of conquerors, whose martial music was in the air. It was not strange that the invaders as individuals respected property and women, and paid for what they had, for they were Americans. But it was significant that after such an uninterrupted series of victorious battles, after such perfect management of an expedition and such consummate generalship, there was so little for the nation in after years to find glory in. The people of the United States have looked upon that extraordinary war of mediæval brigandage with a cold curiosity, never, save in the South, with an American pride.

After several months of occupation the humiliated Mexicans, through a provisional government, made a treaty of peace. It defined the new boundaries between the two Republics to be the Rio Grande and a line drawn westward at about 32°. This left to the United States not only all the disputed acreage of Texas, which we had pretended was the cause of the war, but also Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and upper California, reaching northward to the line of our new Oregon. The United States agreed to pay $15,000,000 to Mexico for what had been forced from her, and to assume all the old spoliation claims. Renewed friendship was subscribed and peaceable adjustment was promised for future disputes. Then the stars and stripes came down in the Plaza and the Mexican troops marched in as the American column disappeared towards the sea.

The war was over so far as concerned the weaker Republic; but it had left dragons' teeth to the United States. Slavery in the new territory was the consuming question. Both parties tried not to make it a party issue, and in proportion to their success in this avoidance it became tenfold more portentous as the inescapable sectional contradiction. The President in his inaugural address had warned the people against the evils of anti-slavery agitation; and such was his belief in the excellence of slavery, it is probable that he really expected that his glowing programme of land-acquisition would be able to divert attention from the theme of human bondage. So far was it from this, that the great anti-slavery revival began in Polk's administration; and it was both the direct and the indirect result of Polk's policy.

This revival began in Polk's first Congress. The war having begun, Congress was ready to hold up the President's hands in all the military measures he proposed. It also acceded to his request for $2,000,000 with which he said he hoped to purchase peace. But while this bill was before the House, in August, 1846, a fateful thing happened. A Democrat from Pennsylvania, a plain man of Dutch build, David Wilmot by name, presented an amendment to the bill as a proviso that in none of the new territory to be acquired should slavery or involuntary servitude except for crime be permitted. This was only an extension of the old ordinance of 1787 that slavery should not go into the territories. But it was also a cool proviso that would upset the entire Southern enterprise. It was, however, such a simple and straightforward cutting of the tangled knot that it at once caught the Northern fancy. The proviso

was accepted by the House, but it reached the Senate too late to be acted on before adjournment.

The "Wilmot Proviso" went immediately before the country. In the South it was ridiculed and execrated. In the North it was immensely popular for a long time. It seemed to say the whole thing. It was a test of the ingenuousness of the administration's policy: Was the war for a national principle of honour or was it for slavery extension, pure and simple?

In the Congressional elections of that autumn this proviso helped make votes against the administration. It was the convincing and mathematical ally of the conscience Whigs and the conscience Democrats in their denunciation of the war. In the next session of Congress, when the President asked for $3,000,000 for peace money, the proviso was again attached to the House bill. But this time it was rejected by the Senate, and the House accepted the refusal. The Whigs had begun to be jealous of the proviso, as they claimed it was a stealing of their thunder by the Northern Democrats. Nevertheless, it remained the pillory of the insincerity of the war.

The President's tour through the North, with the idea of making a stand against the condemnation under which he smarted, was not successful. The revulsion at him and his works by the most intelligent classes of Northern society was too strong for his speeches or his person to win the coveted favour. The second Congress which met in 1847 had a Whig majority in the House. It did nothing of moment, but it amused itself by attacks on the President's conduct of the war. It was a notable Congress, however, for the fact that both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis appeared in it. It also saw

the death of the venerable John Quincy Adams, who fell at his desk—the grandest champion who has ever glorified the House.

It was in the air ever since the battle of Buena Vista that General Taylor would be the next Whig candidate, and, as surely, the next president. It was also certain that President Polk had no chance whatever of election, and the Democrats had no mind to lose the election in order to vindicate their President for obeying their instructions. They decided that they had had enough of Southern presidents for a time, and now looked for a Northern man who would bend to Southern maxims. On the 22d day of May, 1848, the Democratic national convention at Baltimore nominated Lewis Cass of Michigan and William O. Butler of Kentucky. Cass was an ideal Northern man with Southern principles who had all his political life yielded to every demand the planters made. The platform approved the war in its totality, but was non-committal on the question of slavery in the territories.

But the interest of the country was chiefly with the nomination of General Taylor in Philadelphia, the 7th of June. Webster said it was not fit to be made. Clay, who believed that in this best year of Whig influence he would again be the candidate was disappointed once more and for the last time. The Whigs would have no other but the old warrior. He had been steadily victorious. The President had rewarded his achievements with conspicuous efforts to hide his glory. He was the most available man for two objects,—to fight the administration and to divert attention from the slavery question. In order to avoid slavery altogether no platform was adopted. And yet, though both the great parties thus with

clever calculation ignored that question, it was to decide the election after all, in a way they could not foresee.

A strange amalgamation led to the making of the new Free Soil party of 1848. First, there was the old Liberty party, with increasing numbers. Close in sentiment to them were the conscience Whigs who despised the temporising of their party in avoiding the Wilmot proviso and in nominating a slave-owner. The conscience Democrats were in harmony with the Barnburner faction of the New York delegation, which had withdrawn, indignant, from the convention after the subservient nomination of Cass. These bodies coalesced in a Free Soil convention at Buffalo on August 9, and nominated the most distinguished mutineer against the oligarchy—ex-president Martin Van Buren. This party had a platform of powerful declarations. It based itself flatly on the doctrine of the Wilmot proviso, and went much further. While it disclaimed any right to interfere with slavery in States, it claimed the right and the duty to prohibit it forever in all the territories under control of Federal government. Congress, it declared, had no more right to make a slave than to make a king. Free soil, free speech, free labor, free men, were the fervid and rhythmic phrases with which this very genuine paper ended. Had there been some one else than Van Buren at the head of it, who can tell how much more widely it might have carried among the quickened consciences of the North that autumn? But the nation was not yet prepared for the throes of a Southern secession.

As it was, the Whigs following Webster and Greeley gave the Free Soil ticket scant support, in spite of their moral awakening. But as Whigs withdrew,

Democrats came; and the 291,263 Free Soil votes were enough to defeat Cass soundly. Of course these votes came from the free States, the courageous exceptions being 9 in Virginia and 125 in Maryland. Cass received 1,220,544 votes, and Taylor 1,360,099. In the electoral college Cass had 127 and Taylor 163.

When Congress reassembled in December after this election, the administration had reason for dejection. The President had conducted an extraordinarily successful war, and had added an empire to his country. But he himself was covered with obloquy, and the Democratic policy he had followed was condemned at the polls. His message was a long argument in justification of the war, with suggestions for a brotherly compromise of the slavery question by an extension of the Missouri Compromise line, 36° 30′, to the Pacific.

Polk's strange career was finished when on Monday, March 5, 1849, he left the White House to the general whose fame he had tried to arrest. He survived his office but a few weeks. Overwork and mortification had together so broken him that he could not resist disease. On the 15th of June, 1849, he passed away at his house, in his fifty-fifth year.

The contrast between the personal reprobation of the President by the public and the extent of the material advantage he had conferred upon his country is one of the memorable points in American history. It was "manifest destiny" that this nation should possess the continent to the western ocean, just as it was later that slavery should be abolished. But the agent of the first achievement was regarded as the "scourge of God," while the worker of the latter was His prophet and the shepherd of His people. The repudiation of President Polk happened

because of the way he did the fated task. The motive he obeyed was not humane, but barbarous and selfish to the degree of brutality. The methods he used to open the war were hypocrisy and dissimulation; with all his effort to put Mexico in the wrong, he succeeded only in putting his own country in the wrong. The consummate despatch with which the war was pushed to its speedy end never excited so much commendation that men did not stop to pity the proud and heroic victims. These lost their crown that slavery might triumph over freedom in another republic. Their sentiments were nobler than ours, unprogressive as they were as a people. When the articles of peace were being discussed, the Mexican commissioners begged for a clause promising that slavery should not enter the domain which they had already purged of human bondage. The American commissioner, Polk's confidential agent, replied that if the territory "were increased tenfold in value, and covered a foot thick with pure gold, on the single condition that slavery were to be forever excluded" he would "not entertain the offer for a moment, nor even think of sending it to his government. No American President would dare to submit such a treaty to the Senate."

The land did prove to be as valuable to this nation's development as if it had been covered with gold over its entire surface; but the heart of the real American people was too sound for such a traffic to be other than the bitterest humiliation.

Against this gigantic shame the pure, rigorous and pious life of the President and his saintly wife, as well as the remarkable business capacity of his administration, make the figure of an anti-climax. Yet the American historian, Bancroft, writing from vivid

memories of the way things were made to move while he was in Polk's cabinet, said that "his administration, viewed from the standpoint of results, was perhaps the greatest in our national history, certainly one of the greatest." It is safe to believe that if this most sane historian had been able to attain the perspective of history in which to regard the brilliant execution of those days, he would have used a more discerning word than, great.

PRESIDENT ZACHARY TAYLOR

(PART OF ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1849-1850.)

CHAPTER XXII.

A PRESIDENT FROM THE CAMP.

A THIRD time in twenty years the American people had made a president out of a military idol. General Taylor's laurels, unlike those of Jackson and Harrison, were fresh from recent battlefields; and unquestionably the blunt old warrior, rather than General Scott, was the popular hero of the Mexican war. Not less than his brilliant victories, his personal ways appealed to the imagination of his countrymen. General Scott was consummate as a military scientist and superb as a fighting general; but his vanities and pomp—"Fuss and Feathers" he was nicknamed—left little in reserve for the popular fancy to fill out. Taylor, on the contrary, left all his bedecking for the imagination of his admirers, for he was plain in manner—"old Rough and Ready" he was called,—he got along with as little uniform as possible, he let others take care of his prestige; but in camp and in fight he was the incarnation of resourcefulness, decisiveness and intrepidity.

Yet he would not have been hailed instantly by

the Whig managers as the one and only presidential personality for 1848, if they had not felt an imperative need for an availability once more rather than for a statesman. A man of well-known views, a constructive leader who stood pronounced on all the definite issues, would have been a too dangerous experiment for the Whigs that year. Disintegration over the slavery question had struck both parties, but the Whigs were the more shaky. There was really but one prominent issue. The old questions which the parties had battled over were about fought out. The doctrines the people were actually discussing were those which the Free Soil convention boldly published. Should there be any new slave States? Should slavery be prohibited in all the territories as Wilmot said, or allowed in all the territories as Calhoun said, or be kept below 36° 30′ as Polk said?

Neither of the great parties in 1848 dared go before the people on these issues; neither could have agreed within itself upon a platform which answered these questions; the line of intense and rancourous difference of opinion wound like a serpent in each party. The future was gloomy with uncertainty. Only the slave-driving section of the Democratic party had a clear programme. As for either party as a whole, there were so many anti-slavery Democrats at the North and pro-slavery Whigs at the South and so many anti-agitation men in both parties, that there was no policy at all except to keep the issue out of the presidential contest. This was one strong reason why the presidents of this period were of distinctly smaller pattern than those before 1840 and after 1860; the men of this double decade who were great had marked records on the slavery question; Clay in 1844 was an instance of their difficulty as candidates.

Consequently, Taylor's war record and personal acceptability made him a godsend to the Whig managers.

Zachary Taylor had soldier blood to begin with, his father having been Colonel Richard Taylor of the Revolution. The Taylors came from Carlisle on the English border, but they had been Virginians for five generations when the future president was born, September 24, 1784. After the Revolution Virginia bestowed a land bounty on her veteran soldiers, and Colonel Taylor took up a grant in Kentucky, which was then but a vast county in the parent State. Here were but few settlers, and the life was the rough and rigorous one of farmers in the frontier wilderness. Thus young Taylor, like young Polk, grew up a strenuous product of the New West. But unlike Polk he had no high scholarly tastes nor large educational opportunities. He had, however, a much better education than most pioneer boys, at his father's prosperous hearth, where a private Yankee tutor instructed him for years in book learning, and where the soldier neighbours met to talk over their fighting days and to exchange their political notions. The Taylor boys thus caught the military spirit, and all but one of them entered the United States army.

When the army was increased, in 1808, by several regiments preparatory to the possible conflict with Great Britain, Zachary Taylor, then twenty-three years of age, applied for a commission. He received the appointment of 1st Lieutenant in the new 7th Infantry. Two years later by good fortune he rose to be captain. The Indian troubles on the frontier were frequent at that time, and there the menace of a foreign war was growing. In Governor Harrison's Tippecanoe campaign in 1811, Captain Taylor's

regulars were in service, though there is no record of his presence at the great battle. After the declaration of war the Indians again grew bold and threatened the whole Wabash valley. Captain Taylor was ordered to defend Fort Harrison, a stockade on the river above Vincennes, which settlement was to be protected. There his company of fifty men, reduced to less than a score of effectives by fever, foiled and repulsed a large attacking force of Indians. This was so thoroughly done that when in the autumn relief came, the Indians had quite disappeared from the neighbourhood. For this good work Taylor received the brevet of major, an unusual honour at that period. The next year Major Taylor with the regulars was undertaking an expedition against the Indians on the Wabash. In 1814 he became major by commission and conducted a company against the savages and their British allies on Rock river. The treaty of peace found the young officer in this hazardous but inconspicuous service which secured the frontier.

By the military peace establishment of 1815 the United States army was cut down to 10,000 men. The President rearranged, transferred and discharged officers, to form the new corps. In the reduction Taylor was set back to a captaincy. This, though proper, appeared to him to be so unjust in view of the successful exploits of his battalion, that he resigned from the army, going home "to make a crop of corn," as he used afterwards to say. But government reversed its decision and President Madison in 1816 restored him to the rank of major in the 3d Infantry, and he then returned permanently to army life. For two years he had command of Fort Winnebago, a most advanced post in the wilds of

Wisconsin. Then, after a well-earned year of absence spent with his family in Kentucky, he had his next promotion as lieutenant-colonel of the 4th Infantry.

In 1832 he had become colonel of the 1st Infantry regiment, and entered into the second Black Hawk campaign under General Atkinson. During the army's close pursuit of Black Hawk and his nephew, the Prophet, occurred the unfortunate ambuscade known as Stillman's Run, and the Indian defeat of the Bad Axe. Taylor was active throughout the exciting campaign, and was on duty at Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, when Black Hawk appeared to surrender.

While still a young officer, Taylor had married an attractive Maryland girl. She became an ideal army woman and followed her husband's fortunes during his many years of frontier service, except when he was in the field. He acquired a cotton plantation in Louisiana, and here his family came to reside when he was on active campaign. The Seminole war of 1836 took Colonel Taylor to Florida, where he fought the decisive battle of Okechokee against the Indians. For this gallant action the President gave him the brevet of brigadier-general, and he was made the chief commander in Florida. His next assignment was the command of the Southwestern Division of the army. Here he was while the Mexican trouble was brewing, and it was his fortune to be the general ordered by President Polk in 1845 to enter the disputed territory between Texas and Mexico.

Taylor was sixty-one years old when his opportunity came. But his training as an Indian fighter had given him the best possible preparation for a war against an army formed on European models. In

Indian warfare most of the military conventions which attend the highly organised European army are discarded for the sake of flexibility, and each soldier is expected to be as resourceful as an Indian; and to aim his rifle in battle as he aims it in hunting; the commander depends on his own ingenuity for his dispositions, without taxing his memory with the formal rules of war; in short, the one rule for Indian fighting is instant effectiveness with the least trouble. In the series of victories which Taylor was now to present to his country, it is possible to see the peculiar habit of mind which his exclusively Indian experience had given him. What he would have done had he been called on to handle large armies on a complicated scale it is possible only to infer; but in the management of what was put in his hands he ranks as one of the most judicious, unerring, prompt, and intrepid generals on the roll of the army of the United States. In the training of his troops, in the adaptation of his combinations to the vast distances of the wilderness in which he operated, in his estimate of his enemy, and in his forecast of what his enemy would do, in his celerity and accuracy of mind in battle, in the soundness and the courage of his decisions, Taylor proved that a forest experience against the wily Indians is the best possible school for a fighting general.

Possessed of this highest competence, his disregard of many of the conventionalities of the polished officer made him the more admired. He hated display, and dressed carelessly, inconsiderate of the pomp of war. General Grant tells a story of one awkward occasion when Taylor did dress. He was to receive a visit from the commanding naval officer of the Gulf squadron, who had the repute of a stickler for the accom-

paniments of rank. Taylor accordingly, in honour to his guest, stood stiff and unhappy in his full uniform, which had been gathered and furbished for the occasion. On the other hand, the flag officer, who had heard of Taylor's contempt for fuss, presented himself in his undress uniform. Each one wished he had done the other thing and explanations were embarrassing.

But if Taylor was careless of military appearance, even to his famous habit in battle of sitting his horse sidewise, he was more careless of the personal dangers to which he exposed himself. He was accustomed to be close to the firing line, steadying the men and making his own observations of the enemy, ready on the instant to take advantage of an error on the part of the foe, or to correct a weakness among his own regiments. If it was bad judgment for a commander to take this constant risk, it belonged to Taylor's lifelong method, for in Indian fights the leader has no safe place out of the melée,—he is himself the embodiment of the battle. Taylor's battles were not so extensive in area as to lessen the advantage to be gained at the cost of this personal exposure.

Each of Taylor's battles in Mexico was a marked test of his quality. The inferior character of the Mexicans as fighters does not rob his skill of its high degree. For not only were his numbers less than theirs, but his chief obstacles were the physical and moral conditions of the campaign. Immense and bewildering distances from his starting-point, in a sparsely inhabited country which was scoured by hostile guerrillas, required a steady and superior resoluteness of mind. The jealousy on the part both of the President and of General Scott, which left him to his own initiative, now interfered with his

plans, and lastly withdrew from him the greater part of the flower of his troops at the moment when Santa Anna was marching upon him with an army double his own, only served to reveal in him a resourcefulness of the highest distinction.

Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, though small affairs as to the number of men engaged compared with the tremendous battles of the Civil War, were conducted with a neatness of conception and a promptitude of action that showed the born soldier who is at home on any field. The siege and capture of Monterey marked a master of combinations as well as a general who knows the value of unremitting assault. If the terms he gave to the defenders on their capitulation proved too liberal afterwards in the altered plan of campaign, it was an Anglo-Saxon generosity to a fallen but proud foe, which his countrymen liked though the President disapproved. Buena Vista, the largest and most brilliant of his battles, in which his force was half that of the enemy and composed principally of volunteer recruits who had not been under fire before, exhibited a remarkable capacity for dispositions, for detecting errors, for making trembling men steady, and for a sense of critical junctures. Had Taylor been in the Civil War his qualities suggest that he might have been another Stonewall Jackson.

After Buena Vista the war was transferred to Scott's expedition against the capital city, and Taylor remained on guard in front of the northern section of Mexico, which the United States had thus cut off for acquisition. He was aware of the enthusiasm with which the Whigs were pressing his name for the next presidency. But he had the sagacity to keep out of the movement in every way until the war was

over and he was actually nominated at the Philadelphia convention, June 9, 1848.

It was a sudden change for the grizzled frontier soldier who had been an officer in the service now for just forty years. Away from the finer associations of the East, a homely and weather-beaten army man, he had been patient in his work and had never thought of political advancement. An opportunity to show his soldier quality, four or five battles, an envious setting aside in order to give the superb Scott the larger chance,—and now he was whirled to the very top. At the first of the convention he led every competitor; Henry Clay, General Scott, and Daniel Webster were all down the list; and on the fourth ballot he had a clear majority over the field.

The general was not a notable publicist; he had never even voted at a national election so busy had been his soldier life; but he had sound common sense. Webster and Clay were both contemptuous at the idea of putting forward a man so notoriously untrained in state-craft, unfamiliar, indeed, with the rudiments of Washington procedure. Nevertheless, they gave him a reluctant support, and the people had faith that the soldier who had handled himself with wisdom in Mexico would be honest and aboveboard as president. It was against him in the North that he was a slave-holder; but all the Southern presidents had been likewise; and discerning Whigs believed he would put the Union above slavery, as Polk and Tyler had not. They did not know, however, how valiant in this loyalty he would be against the plotters of disunion; nor did they know how clean and undevious would be his sense of the correct course for a perplexed patriotism to take.

Elected by a comfortable majority, he was inaugu-

rated on Monday, March 5, 1849. Washington was pleasantly disappointed when it saw the man. Rough and Spartan-like in the field, he had the self-possessed manner of a commander of men, the grace and affability of a well-bred planter. Both Clay and Webster, in spite of their ill feeling at his nomination, called upon him with hearty assurances of respect and support. The inaugural address was characteristic for its simplicity and sincerity of spirit, warmly patriotic, but uncommunicative as to definite programme. The cabinet named were, Secretary of State, John M. Clayton of Delaware; Treasury, William M. Meredith of Pennsylvania; War, George W. Crawford of Georgia; Navy, William B. Preston of South Carolina; Postmaster-general, Jacob Collamer of Vermont; Attorney-general, Reverdy Johnson of Maryland. A new department had been added by the last Congress, that of the Interior, and Thomas Ewing of Ohio was its first Secretary. The cabinet was not distinguished, and though it had some able men, events proved that the President was a quicker judge of soldiers than of statesmen. A needless scandal over the payment of a money claim developed in the cabinet, wherein three of its members had not avoided an appearance of evil, and the President's last days were embittered by it. The Secretary of State, Clayton, made his name historic by its linking with Lord Bulwer's in the Clayton-Bulwer treaty with Great Britain. At that time the terms of the treaty, which provided for a canal from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, and took Great Britain into the protectorate, were esteemed advantageous. But it proved a most vexatious piece of diplomacy, and Clayton's foresight was seen to have been short.

But one of the newer men whom the President

called to him for counsel was a wise choice. He did not meet Senator Seward of New York in time to put him into the cabinet, although his influence during the late campaign in holding the conscience Whigs to their party's candidate had been of large effect. But the Senate was the true place for Seward, who saw with clearest eye of any man in Congress the true situation in regard to slavery, and the only principles that were pertinent to it. This young senator, who was to be presently the founder of the Republican party, and who might be said to have taken up the mantle of Clay save for the fact that his political principles were more lofty and unerring, was drawn to the person of the President; and the artless and downright soldier found in Seward a man who talked sense and saw straight. Lincoln, a dozen years later, prized Seward as his chief minister for the same qualities.

During the summer of 1849 affairs were taking place in California which gave the distinct colour to Taylor's short administration, and which also nearly resulted in a dissolution of the Union. The year before, on January 24, 1848, gold was discovered in California. It was in a lumber camp that the shining particles were noticed by Marshall, an employee of Captain Sutter. The latter, the great autocrat of the region and a Swiss of intelligence, applied such crude tests as he could remember, decided that it was really gold, and shared the secret with everybody. No other news ever travelled so fast. The whole population was in a state of frenzy. The country had a mixed lot of people—the old Mexicans living still in their Spanish laws and customs, half-civilised Indians, and new American settlers, prospectors and adventurers drawn by the wonderful climate and

fertility. In a few days it seemed as if everybody in California had come to the gold river. Villages, haciendas, farms, camps were left absolutely bare of people. Captain Sutter's camp in a few weeks was a city of thousands. The rawest means were employed to coax the gold. In the absence of all law the claims were settled by primitive conventions. Violence and bloodshed were daily arguments.

In a few weeks New York knew what had happened; the country, the world knew it. The pent-up passion for gold started hundreds on their journey the first week, scores of thousands before summer. By way of Cape Horn, by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and overland,—there were not ships enough to carry the crazy crowds, and the wagon-trains on the six months' march were so continuous that the Indians in wonder let them pass. Not Americans only, but Chilians, Peruvians, Australians, Hawaiians, Malays, and Chinese, were soon sailing into San Francisco. By the spring of 1849 the wagon-trains were pouring across the mountains with increasing thousands. These were the Argonauts of '49, the Forty-niners, as they are known to their descendants. In that one year 39,000 came to California in the terribly crowded and often half-sinking hulks, and 42,000 by the more terrible wagon route.

Settled government there was none, save that of the military governor-general. Laws for the protection of the commonest rights were imperatively needed. The sullen Congress which adjourned as Taylor went in, had neglected to provide a territorial government. By 1849 there were enough people in California to form a sovereign State instead of a territory. Accordingly, one of the first acts of President Taylor was to send a confidential agent to start

the ball rolling for the formation of a State. The Californians needed no urging, and independently they had themselves called a convention of such delegates as could be prevailed on to leave the digging for a brief time to make a plan of government. They had had enough of anarchy, absence of all land titles, lack of police, settlement of disputes by bowie-knife or gun, lynchings, and Indian raids, and they wanted instant protection. The two movements happily coalesced, and on September 3d a constitutional convention met at Monterey. Its members were young and able, for the East had given to California of its intelligence as well as of its daring. The new constitution was modelled on those of New York and Iowa. Its most important feature was that slavery was prohibited, even the Southern members not venturing to contradict. By November the people had voted to adopt this constitution for their State, now with a population of 107,000; and John C. Frémont and William M. Gwin were made the first senators.

When Congress assembled in December the extraordinary news that California was ready for Statehood, and that she repudiated slavery, fell with appalling effect upon the Southern statesmen. All their plans had gone wrong. They had not had time to colonise California with slave-owners; nor were they to have even the old compromise line of 36° 30′ run through it to the Pacific, cutting the vast region in two. It had been suddenly filled up past repair by a race of hardy Northerners who hated slavery as a pestilence. "Manifest destiny" showed a new aspect. The war had been a Southern sowing for a Northern reaping. The long cherished equilibrium in the Senate between the free and the slave States

would now be changed to a free State majority. The free State majority in the lower House had hitherto been ineffective against the slave power in the Senate. Now slavery could be outvoted everywhere.

This unexpected and intolerable situation, Southern men said to one another, was the beginning of the end. It would soon be all over with slavery as quickly as Northern statesmen learned not to be cowed by Southern violence or cajoled by Southern affability. The opening of the session was accordingly marked by an outburst of Southern animosity, unrestrained and without precedent. Disunion threats were heard on every side. In the House three weeks were consumed before a Speaker could be elected, the Southerners were so unyielding; and during that time secession was the staple of fiery declamation. It is hard to understand why the Northern members did not unite once and for all to withstand these united maniacs. The only explanation is their consuming love of the Union and their consequent willingness to endure insolence and submit to arrogance for its preservation.

President Taylor came in for the blame. It was he who had encouraged California to do this smart and confounding thing. It was more natural to reproach him for his promptness in helping California out of anarchy than to hold the preceding Congress responsible for its neglect. When his message was read he was still more blamed, for besides urging the immediate admission of California, with her free constitution, he advised that the people of New Mexico, still under military government, be encouraged to form their own constitution as a State without introducing any of the sectional questions among them, along with a temporary territorial establishment.

While this last recommendation was a literal avoidance of the Wilmot proviso issue, it would mean the idea of the proviso in the end, as the New Mexico people were believed to disfavour slavery. But though Taylor was a slave-owner himself, he did not want to see the extension of slavery. He had no interest in the Calhoun sophistries as to the imperative need of that institution to the South.

The Southern partisans asked the President if he would sign any bill which had the Wilmot proviso attached. He replied that he would sign any bill from Congress which was constitutional. They had nothing to hope from him. They attributed his independent policy to young Senator Seward. Among the anti-slavery men at the North there was exultation at this unanticipated stand of a Southern President. It also seemed too good to be true that the slave-holders' new doctrine of "squatter sovereignty," by which they had calculated to circumvent the limitations of the Missouri Compromise, had so quickly turned itself to plague them. They had been fairly checkmated through their own scheme.

In the Senate both Clay and Webster had been returned to their seats after a few years of absence. Clay had been sent back by the State to make one more great effort to save the Union from disruption. He was in his seventy-third year and in delicate health. Webster was in his sixty-eighth year, and so was the third of that triumvirate of giants, Calhoun. Never at any one time before or since has the Senate had in its seats so many men of eminent ability, and these three were the greatest minds that ever led in that body. No other legislators have had such influence upon American political development. Calhoun was the creator of a solid South,

bound to support slavery or break the Union. Clay was the creator of great national policies, unrivalled as a constructive legislator, and an orator of superlative magnetism and grace. Webster, however, was the royal orator, the profound logician, the man of wonder; "godlike" was the adjective that followed him; he was worshipped with a cult that turned his moral weaknesses into singular graces. Clay was the most popular of the three; even his enemies loved "Lord Harry"; when great legislation was necessary, men were used to wait for Clay's initiative.

In this session Clay originated a new body of legislation which makes that Congress the most notable up to the Civil War. It was a set of so-called compromise measures, known as the Compromise of 1850, which did save the Union at that time by pushing off the "irrepressible conflict," as Seward called it, for ten years more. While listening to the wild speeches of the Southern lords, Clay conceived a scheme which he conceived might arrest the stampede. He submitted it to Webster, January 21, 1850, and he approved it heartily. It consisted of a coalescence of several old and new measures which, if bundled together, would represent an apparent compromise. These measures were: (1) The immediate admission of California, with her anti-slavery constitution; (2) The erection of New Mexico and Utah into Territories, saying nothing about slavery; (3 and 4) The boundary dispute between Texas and New Mexico to be adjusted with a payment of money to Texas; (5) Refusal to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; (6) Prohibition of slave markets in the District; (7) A new and severe Fugitive Slave Law; (8) No hindrance of the slave trade between States.

This seemed to Clay and Webster a real and a fair

compromise. The radicals of the North, however, pointed out that the only real concession given to anti-slavery sentiment was the abolition of the open slave markets at the capital itself; that California was no concession, as she could not be kept out, and yet her admission was loaded down with the slave problem in the territories with which she had nothing to do; and that a new Fugitive Slave Law was an acute insult to the humane sentiment of the North thrust across the border. The Southern radicals, however, put up an apparently serious cry that they were getting nothing.

In the midst of the turbulence, while Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia was urging his State to raise an army and go to making gunpowder, while Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was demanding for slavery every inch south of the 36° 30′ line run through to the Pacific, Clay arose to make his great speech for the Compromise. The speech had been expected, and on February 5th the city was thronged with visitors who hoped to hear him. The galleries of the little chamber were packed, the corridors were crowded, multitudes were outside the Capitol. When the orator addressed the Chairman there was spontaneous applause for the glory of the man, and it was taken up outside in roaring cheers. When the long, pleading, convincing speech was over, men knew it had been the zenith of his oratory. For over forty years he had been a leader in Congress; his service reached back to Jefferson, and there could never be another climax of his matchless persuasiveness. It was an appeal to the North to concede, to the South to accept peace. He saw the acute danger and exclaimed: "War and dissolution of the Union are identical." It was a speech that did persuade.

A month later, on March 4th, Calhoun presented his speech on the Compromise. Owing to his feebleness it was read for him by another senator. It was dark with pessimism. He saw nothing effective in Clay's plan; it gave only a piece of what the South wanted; unless the abolition talk could stop, unless the old equilibrium could be restored, unless runaway slaves were refused a Northern refuge, the discussion had better cease and the South depart. This was Calhoun's dying speech. It embodied all the relentless logic he had for twenty years been inculcating upon the South. He wanted secession to come at once if at all, since, he argued, the South was stronger in proportion to the North than she would be a few years hence. Therefore he was inexorable for forcing the extreme issue then.

Three days later Webster followed with his famous Seventh of March Speech. It was also his last great deliverance in the Senate. But unlike the speeches of Clay and Calhoun, it meant for him the eclipse of his glory. Scrupulously attired, as was his wont for great occasions, he faced the expectant Senate with the declaration that he spoke now not as a Massachusetts man or as a Northern man, but as an American. Yet he who had been the very champion of freedom, who had driven the South in magnificent rout in his reply to Hayne, who had thrown himself across the path of the extension of slavery, now spoke not as an American but as a Southern man. The speech reviewed the history of slavery in a judicial style wherein was no reproach; it reviewed the grievances of the South against the North at great length, and barely named the grievances of the North against the South; it counselled each to yield to the other, though the concessions he urged most were

those of his own North; it was a plea for union since peaceable disunion was impossible, which was its soundest declaration. As a whole, it was a brief for the South. Its offensiveness to the North was not altogether in what it said, though his old idolaters had not looked for a preaching of the duty of catching runaway slaves from Daniel Webster; it was worst in what it left unsaid, and in its sickening caresses for the South.

The Southerners were expecting something like this. Alexander Stephens wrote on February 24: "I hear that Daniel Webster intends to make a speech that will win him golden opinions from the Potomac to the Rio Grande." But to the whole North it was an appalling surprise. He had deserted the President whose policy was exactly what Webster had defined for him in 1848. He had dug up all in his own record and thrown it away. He had sneered with his giant scorn at the conscience of New England. He had belittled the mighty contention of principle against slavery into a foolish wrangle. On the day when the lovers of freedom expected another grand assault, like the reply to Hayne, their godlike leader had gone over to the enemy with all his baggage. It was Webster's destruction. If he was absolutely sincere in feeling that unless the North now yielded every claim and acknowledged the anti-slavery principle to be visionary the Union would now dissolve in war, then he betrayed that he had lost his manhood courage. If he judged that the pendulum in Massachusetts had swung to the "conservative element," to the "broadcloth mob," and that the days of the agitators were over, he showed that he had lost his moral sensibility and political acumen. But if his chief thought was the winning

of Southern favour to his election to the presidency, he overestimated the idolatry of the North, and also he under-reckoned the Southern love of consistency. Yet the speech had much effect especially in the Middle and Western States in favour of the compromise.

There was one more great speech that month. Senator Seward followed with an argument for the President's straightforward and natural policy which at another time would have carried conviction. But the long era of compromises, of fanciful estimates of equilibrium, and of the manufacture of unnatural issues, had so perverted the public mind that a firm and downright policy seemed foolishness. Consequently, the only thoroughly discerning speech of that session had to wait for years to be recognised. But when Seward said that there was "a higher law" to which the Constitution was an attempted conformity—a higher law which might not be abrogated by phrases and formulas, he was speaking in a prophetic simplicity which could not be understood by that generation of statesmen.

Meantime the President was left like a rebuked novice. Clay said he knew of no prominent members of Congress who had intimate relations with Taylor. Because Clay and Webster had pointed away from the President's policy to one more complex, it was said that he had broken with his party. But he had no thought of weakening in his conception of the natural thing to do. In the Texas imbroglio, when that State sent her militia to take possession of the section she claimed in New Mexico, the President ordered the United States troops to resist this invasion. It was part of a Southern scheme in which Texas was to seize New Mexico and

prevent the people there from forming an anti-slavery State constitution, as California had done. When Southern senators attempted to intimidate the President by telling him that Southern officers would refuse to obey orders for the coercing of Texas, the old soldier replied that he would hang them. To him the menace of secession was the threat of treason, and he had no refinements as to the way of dealing with traitors.

But in the midst of the truculent turmoil, before one of the compromise measures had passed, death came to the President. On July 4 he exposed himself imprudently in the fierce sun at the ceremonies of the Washington Monument. A slight sickness developed into a fever, and that was aggravated by a message from certain Southerners that Congress was about to censure him for his carelessness regarding the cabinet scandal. On the 9th of July, while both Houses adjourned in sudden awe, the President died, saying like a soldier, "I have endeavoured to do my duty."

The second President elected by the Whigs was carried to his grave from the White House. Fatality attended their victories. Clay and Webster, Cass and Benton walked among the pall-bearers. Silent multitudes watched the solemn military pageant which recalled the old hero's fields of renown. Yet he did not carry with him the unanimity of profound grief that he would if he had not estranged both his section and the most of his party by his independence and directness. Webster said that he had died fortunately. General Taylor knew he was not a great statesman; but if he was worthy to occupy the chair of the Chief Executive, he was bound to be dutiful to the whole nation. He saw a straight course before

him which it seems now that all men should have seen then. The "omnibus bill" of the Compromise was to him a conglomeration of incongruities which avoided the main issue instead of meeting it, which was a concession to the spirit of slavery, which concealed treason, and which was to be the source of more troubles than it remedied. If the men of formulas could not perceive this, the man of intuition and naturalness of mind could understand it clearly. President Taylor was too single-minded for his time. He would have been unable to stem the foolish policy of the wise men. What he might have resisted if forced into a corner is conjecture. But it is doubtful if the political common judgment of 1850 was developed enough to back him as that of 1861 supported Lincoln. The cup of Southern arrogance and Northern timidity was not yet full.

PRESIDENT MILLARD FILLMORE.

(PART OF ONE ADMINISTRATION, 1850-1853.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LULL OF COMPROMISE.

When President Taylor's unexpected successor took oath of office before the two Houses of Congress in the Hall of the Representatives, it was a natural question whether this would mean another Whig undoing. The leading Whigs, however, had little fear that Fillmore would adopt the renegade rôle of Tyler. For, in the first place, Fillmore had held conservatively with the old party leaders while Taylor had broken with them; and next, Fillmore, unlike Tyler, was a real and an original Whig.

The man during whose presidency the second half of the nineteenth century opened, was born in February, 1800. He was another self-made New Yorker, like Van Buren. The Fillmores were honourably descended from Massachusetts mariners. Lieutenant Fillmore, the grandfather of the President, carried through the French and Revolutionary Wars a sword which his father had captured from the pirate captain, John Phillips, in a desperate sea affray.

The son of this Continental officer joined an emigrant train which moved in ox-carts through the length of New York State and took up land on the "military tract" of Cayuga county. In this virgin wilderness he built a log house, and there his second son, Millard, was born. Nathaniel Fillmore was a worthy man but not fortunate in making a good start. A defective title lost him his first piece of property, and in selecting another unimproved tract he got a farm of such poor soil that the following years were hard and unremunerative.

On this stony farm the boys grew up, working the acres more months than they attended school. Their mental stimulation was the Bible and the hymn-book. Millard's father saw in trade a better future for his son than as a farmer, and accordingly at fourteen, the boy was apprenticed on trial to a wool carder and dresser of cloth. By this master he was treated with an injustice that awoke his hot resentment; when the employer threatened him with a thrashing for this spirit the lad lifted an axe and dared him on. As soon as this unhappy probation was over he took his knapsack and started on foot through the forest for his father's home, a hundred miles away. In his biography are Mr. Fillmore's comments on this significant boyish episode, as one that had a marked effect on his character: "It made me feel for the weak and unprotected, and to hate the insolent tyrant in every station of life."

The next year young Fillmore started again in the same business, which was at that time one of good profit. While at the carding machine he studied the first book that he bought, a small English dictionary, than which no other book is more suggestive to the right kind of young man. By the time he turned

nineteen he had come to the conviction that he might be a lawyer. Accordingly he made a bargain with his master, whom he had yet two years to serve, by which, with certain forfeits and payments, he obtained his freedom. In a country lawyer's office he worked for his board, and studied law when he got an hour to himself. In his scant schooling he had learned enough to dare to teach school a little, by which he got a trifle for clothes and books.

He was admitted to the bar as an attorney by the court of common pleas in 1823, before he had finished the required course of legal reading, so favourably had he impressed several leading lawyers of Buffalo. Fillmore began to practise at Aurora, New York, where he won his first case. He was successively admitted as attorney and as counsellor of the supreme court of the State. In 1830 he set up his office in the thriving city of Buffalo. During the next fifteen years the law firm of which he was the senior member became the most prominent in western New York. This success was remarkable in view of his early disadvantages, but he had the natural advantage of a sound legal mind, and great industry did the rest.

His political life began before he was thirty, in the State legislature, where he served three terms. He made himself of note by his obviously honest public service, and by his earnest advocacy of the act to abolish imprisonment for debt, a bill which he had drafted. An early opponent of Jackson, he was elected to Congress in 1832. The Whigs elected him again in 1836 and in 1838, and would have also in 1840, but he declined renomination. While a congressman he was a prodigious worker. He made a digest of the laws authorising appropriations, by

means of which every expenditure of the government could be referred to the law authorising it; and he obtained a law which required the departments to make this reference in every instance. As the chairman of the Ways and Means committee, he outlined the new rates which were put into the revivifying tariff of 1842. During his congressional career Fillmore was a steady supporter of the Whig principles and measures, and it was his best glory that he stood beside John Quincy Adams in his contention for the right of petition.

Fillmore was now a leading figure in New York politics. A large and impressive man, of attractive manners, sound and reliable, he was a safe and available candidate. He ran for governor in 1844, but the Democrat, Silas Wright, defeated him. In 1847 he was elected comptroller of the State by an immense majority. The following year at the Philadelphia convention, when there was a sudden uncertainty whom to settle on for a vice-president to run with General Taylor, Abbott Lawrence being set off as unavailable because his cotton mills were too closely allied with the King Cotton of the South, the choice fell on the trusty and handsome Fillmore.

Taylor formed a frank liking for him, and he knew so little of affairs at the capital that he supposed that Fillmore would be an ex-officio member of the cabinet. Senator Seward and the Vice-President were heads of two factions in New York. Friends tried to effect an understanding between them before they went to Washington, but the effort was unavailing, and the two continued as polite rivals in the President's inner circle. During the angered and turbulent debate of the first session of 1849-'50, Fillmore announced his intention to maintain order, and

if occasion required, to return to the ancient usage of his earlier predecessors, which gave to the presiding officer authority to call disturbing senators to order. Calhoun, when president of the Senate, had denied the right of this rule, since he favoured the license of those who vilified the Adams administration. Fillmore was so impartial during the debate on Clay's "omnibus bill," that none in the Senate knew his preference. But as his rival, Seward, took one course it was not unnatural that the Vice-President, sitting in his silence, found his conservative disposition favouring the Compromise measures. And he confided to the President that if the bill came to a tie vote, he should have to vote with Clay.

The day following General Taylor's death, on July 10, Mr. Fillmore took his oath as President of the United States. In accordance with his request, it was administered in the Hall of the Representatives in the presence of both Houses of Congress. He desired it to have no element of solemnity lacking, and the grave faces of the senators and representatives made the spectacle one of historic impressiveness. The character of the administration was changing on the instant. Taylor, a Southerner and a slave-holder, had met issues which made him take the anti-slavery side. Fillmore, selected because he was an anti-slavery man, was now about to turn his back on the desires of the anti-slavery people and to favour the truckling to the South. Yet it is hard to see how he could do otherwise. He was not an artless soldier who answered every question categorically. Much less was he a great man who would stand unsupported by the leaders of his party. Who was Fillmore to tell Clay and Webster that they

were utterly wrongheaded, and to imagine he could maintain that blasphemous proposition?

He turned to Webster for advice in a new cabinet, and gave to him the portfolio of State. The others were: Treasury, Thomas Corwin of Ohio; War, Charles M. Conrad of Louisiana; Navy, William A. Graham of North Carolina; Interior, Alexander H. H. Stuart of Virginia; Attorney-general, John J. Crittenden of Kentucky; Postmaster-general, Nathan K. Hall of New York. Senator Seward's advice was of course no longer desired. Webster left the Senate once more and for the last time,—too late, unhappily, for his great name.

The long session of Congress went on all through the summer and to the end of September. The disputes over Clay's Compromise seemed never ending. Clay yielded more points to the unyielding South, and finally in utter weariness went to the seashore, while the wrangle continued. The conglomerated bills had been untied for separate treatment. One by one they went through, some of them barely. Four senators was the largest number that voted in favour of all the measures. The lower House did not bestow upon them as much debate as the Senate, but voted more promptly. As fast as they passed both Houses, the President signed. There was no talk of veto. The President and all the Northern congressmen were Union savers, and the Southern men, many of them, reluctantly came to the alignment. Yet the concessions had all been to them, for California could not have been kept out because of her anti-slavery constitution. The situation had simmered down to a certainty that the South would secede if California came in, unless the North would guarantee to give up

runaway slaves, promise not to interfere with inter-State slave trade, and give slavery a clear chance in the new territories. The North was willing to do all this on the run if the South would only stay; but the South was slow to consent because she wanted what the North was powerless to give—a forcible suppression of free speech; the brand and stigma of Northern opinion angered the South more than all else. This odium fell upon President Fillmore himself after he wrote "Approved, Sept. 18," upon the Fugitive Slave act, and the reproach followed him.

"Finality" was the familiar word used to seal the Compromise. People said that the end of the long agitation and danger had been seen at last, and if the lion and the lamb were not lying down together, the lion at least was caged. Clay went home to Kentucky in a beatific mood. He had crowned the forty years of his legislative leadership by a final saving of the Union. He had enabled his united country to escape the most imminent destruction. He knew that secession in 1850 was only a matter of months, and that secession meant war; he would have been for military coercion; he would not have gone with his own Kentucky against the Union. But all that frightful swallowing up of the glory of the United States was now averted, he trusted, by the finality of his Compromise.

The President was happy. He knew, however, that full acceptance and tranquillity would take time. In his message to Congress, two months later, he said of the measures: "It would be strange if they had been received with immediate approbation by people and States heated by the exciting controversies of their representatives. I believe those measures to have been required by the circumstances and condi-

tion of the country. . . . They were adopted in the spirit of conciliation and for the purpose of conciliation. I believe that a great majority of our fellow citizens sympathise in that spirit and purpose, and in the main approve, and are prepared in all respects to sustain those enactments." What he meant by "those enactments" was the Fugitive Slave Law, which was the measure that pleased the haughty South most, and which galled the free States the worst.

The President was correct in the latter part of his view, as events proved. "The great majority" were indeed gratified. The idea of the Union had taken hold of the public by growing degrees, till now the word expressed the tenderest patriotism. Nationality, the idea so slender and tenuous when the Constitution was adopted by the independent States, had been nurtured through two generations, until people felt its emotional enthusiasm. Yet it was not exactly nationality, either in the sense of the English, or French, or Spanish race feeling, or even in the sense in which it is understood in America to-day. It was rather the first enthusiasm of self-consciousness at the realisation that the political Union ought to stand for a United People. The old Websterian phrases of twenty years before—"the Union, now and forever, one and inseparable," had been declaimed till the mass of the people felt that they were realities. So the country was ready for one of those amiable and generous passions that from time to time sweep America. Whigs and Democrats united in congratulation. A Union party was seriously talked of. Union mass-meetings were held North and South, with swelling finality resolutions and felicitations, and with chairmen and speakers of

historic lineage. It was a general baptism of Union glory.

But the glorious arch had unsettled foundations. One is reminded of Carlyle's story of how the Frenchmen hugged one another at their feastings over the establishment of a constitutional king just before the Reign of Terror. The Southern radicals, on the one hand, were not deceived into thinking that the troubles of slavery were over. They saw the Northern pocket at the bottom of the Northern emotions over Unionism; they believed that the speechifying was got up by the commercial classes to blind the more thoughtless; and they knew that their old enemies were not intending to give up the ghost. They were not altogether mistaken in the commercial motive, and they were clearly right in their vision of the liveliness of abolition.

The Northern humanitarians, if quiescent for the little while their leaders left them and while Union rhetoric was in the air, were nursing wrath against a day of wrath for their betrayal. To them this Compromise was an agreement with sin. There were slaves still at the national capital, and they were being taken into the new territories which the national government governed. Slaves the moment they crossed the Canadian border were free men, but their masters could bring them in their flaunting livery into New York, into Ohio, into New England, and the shame of it was upon the American citizen in his own free State.

Most intolerable of all was the new insult to Northern humanity in the Fugitive Slave Law. Its provisions were fiendishly explicit. The slave-hunters had the whole paraphernalia of Federal and State government to arrest a colored man on claim and,

without jury trial, to carry him in irons to the South. Police, militia, regular troops, and citizens might be called on by the marshals to enforce these captures; and all those forces were at times summoned. Any citizen aiding a fugitive was guilty of crime. While President Fillmore was saying that the great majority of citizens would "sustain these enactments," Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, about to succeed Webster in the Senate, was saying that he did not believe the conscience of Massachusetts would allow a fugitive slave to be taken from its streets; he did not counsel violence, but he invoked that "irresistible public opinion inspired by the love of God," which would make the detestable law a dead letter. Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose literary life partook too much of the spirit of all the universe to be an extremist in reforms, said: "The act of Congress of September 18, 1850, is a law which every one of you will break on the earliest occasion—a law which no man can obey, or abet in obeying, without loss of self-respect and forfeiture of the name of a gentleman." Giddings, old abolitionist of Ohio, once censured by a terrorized Congress for his brave words, told Congress now that the free people of Ohio would die before they would join the bloodhounds in chasing a panting fugitive. "Let no man tell me," he shouted at Congress, "that there is no higher law than this fugitive bill. We feel there is a law of right, of justice, of freedom, implanted in the heart of every intelligent human being, that bids him look with scorn upon this libel of all that is called law."

Webster, on the other hand, had the deplorable task, as spokesman for Fillmore, of defending this law. He wrote to the President from Boston a few weeks after the bill was passed that "The excite-

ment over the Fugitive Slave Law is fast subsiding, and it is thought there is now no probability of any resistance, if a fugitive should be arrested. Thousands of young men have tendered their services to the marshal at a moment's warning. There is an evident and a vast change of public opinion in this quarter since the adjournment of Congress." He sneered at the conscience which talked of a higher law, and pronounced that no man had a right to put his own conscience above law.

But in mockery of the stately sentences of the advocates of the power and sanctity of the law were the facts. At the passage of the act it had been reckoned that there were at least 15,000 escaped slaves living in the free States. Yet a Southern member declared, a considerably long time afterwards, that not more than four or five slaves had been recaptured under its provisions. The "underground railway" increased rather than diminished its daring operations of handing runaways on from one "station" to another under cover of night. There were celebrated instances of rescues of captives from the hands of the law itself. One was that of Jerry in Syracuse, and the leaders of the rescuing party who battered down the door of the police station and took him from the police, were the Rev. Joseph May, a Unitarian clergyman, and the Hon. Gerrit Smith, who had been a congressman. Another was the case of Shadrach, in Boston, whom colored men rescued and bundled off to Canada. This excited vast attention; Webster apologised for it on the ground that the good people of Boston were taken by surprise; and the President, in a proclamation, called on citizens to support the law. But Theodore Parker declared it the noblest deed done in Boston since the destruction of the

tea in 1773. At another time the slave-hunters were successful in Boston, and with iron chains stretched around the court-house, and militia to guard the horrible procession to the steamship, the negro Sims was carried back to Georgia. This success made one half of Boston frantic, and they went to hear speeches, as they do there when angry. Wendell Phillips addressed one of the crowds on the Common, and such was his frenzy that, as I have been told by an eye-witness who stood near him, white foam came from his mouth and fell in great snowy flecks upon his coat.

Such was the popular explosiveness underneath the finality banquetings of the conservative element. To check the spread of the abolition faith, the Southern slave-barons and the Northern compromisers had done the thing that made the haters of slavery grow faster than ever. This, naturally, was not at once evident; but it was very palpable before many months that while the Whigs had been the Compromise leaders, the Democrats were the gainers. The Whigs were falling apart, the Democrats were uniting and were considered the safer guarantors of the Compromise finality.

While this portentous political evolution was going on, President Fillmore was called upon to deal with two very trying popular ebullitions which, in the hands of a man of less prudence, might have involved the country with foreign powers. One of these episodes grew out of the lawless conditions in the South, and the fancy of some hot-headed men that the Texas adventure could be repeated in Cuba. The other was due to one of the crazy enthusiasms for a laudable personality which occasionally sweep the most staid of Americans from their due sense of

proportion. The first was the ill-starred attempt on Cuba, the second was the reception of Louis Kossuth.

Marisco Lopez, a political adventurer from South America, who had undertaken the freedom of Cuba, had been openly encouraged and aided by many of the radical and most prominent slave-holders. They were ready to set on a conflict with Spain which might result eventually in the annexation of Cuba to the United States as another slave State. The governor of Mississippi was a strong helper. A considerable expedition of American young men got together at New Orleans in the midsummer of 1851, and succeeded in reaching Cuba. But Lopez was a born mismanager and everybody was captured, and nearly all were executed by the Spaniards. Cuba was not ready to "rise," but the Spanish soldiers were ready to kill with promptitude. Both Presidents Taylor and Fillmore had warned American citizens against filibustering; and now the administration proceeded swiftly against the Mississippi governor, who resigned to meet the charges; and against all others who were complicated in abetting the unhappy expedition. To Spain the proper acknowledgments were made, and in a year friendly relations were again restored.

The Kossuth visit was more embarrassing. In Louis Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, the American sentimentalism of liberty had centred since 1848. For, the more the country of equal rights was forced by its practical politics to hedge the institution of slavery at home, the more it yearned to play the missionary of freedom abroad. The revolution in Hungary had failed after Russia went to help Austria. The leader had fled to Turkey. Upon American and British solicitation, the Sultan had

delivered him and his suite to the American frigate *Mississippi*, to be conveyed to the United States. He arrived finally on the 5th of December, 1852, and was greeted with splendid exuberance by the city of New York. No foreigner save Lafayette ever called out such spontaneous and jubilant welcome. The spirit of ovation for this hero of the unsuccessful revolution became a craze throughout the North. The press generally espoused his cause. He was compared to Washington and to William the Silent. Deputations called upon him; banquets were given to him; resolutions promising American arms and men were presented; and large sums of money were raised. New York appeared to be beside itself when listening to his impassioned speeches, uttered in perfect English.

But the metropolitan intoxication did not affect the sober deliberation at Washington. Kossuth chose to interpret his welcome "as a revelation of the fact that the United States are resolved not to allow the despots of the world to trample on oppressed humanity." When advised as to Washington's admonition against entangling foreign alliances, he argued that the light of the eighteenth century was not that of the present conditions. This was going too far. Fillmore and Webster awaited his coming to Washington with apprehensiveness for fear of what Congress might be tempted to do. The President received the distinguished stranger with marked graciousness, but was deaf to his hints of intervention. Congress invited him to be the nation's guest in Washington, and gave him a reception at the Capitol. He found that this generous-hearted people were unstinted in entertainment, banquets, processions, deputations, speeches, and that the newspapers were ready

to go to war for Hungary. But the prudent government gave everything but the one thing he wanted. The following July he was allowed to depart in quiet, dismissed from public attention with that peculiar American drop that foreigners cannot understand.

President Fillmore is remembered in connection with a signal step in the railroad development of the country. In May, 1852, the Erie Railroad, from New York to Lake Erie, 470 miles in length and the longest in America, was formally opened, and the President with his suite made the initial trip, returning from Buffalo by way of Rochester and Albany. A little later he similarly graced the opening of a rail route from Boston to Ogdensburg, meeting there Lord Elgin and a following of Dominion dignitaries. It was a pleasing impression that the President made everywhere, with his manly person and his modest speeches.

It seemed a long time since President Monroe had swung around that same circle, in his antique uniform and transported by horses, yet very many remembered that primitive presidential journey. Then the first passenger steam railroad had not yet been built in England; now the United States had over 10,000 miles of iron track, and the rails could not be made fast enough for the new demands of capital. The main centres throughout the country were connected by the iron roads, and the result upon industry and the problem of distribution, upon commercial connection, upon the transmission of news rapidly and extensively, upon the general acquaintance of the people of different States with one another,—was most effectual in its development of a national spirit among the people.

The telegraph lines had pushed on faster than the

rail. And during Fillmore's administration capitalists were asking aid from government to inaugurate both a railroad and a telegraph to the Pacific. Large steamships were plying regularly on every navigable river and between the coast cities. By fast boats the California mail reached New York in nineteen days. The brisk navy was pushing American interests in all parts of the world; and just now Commodore Perry had succeeded in carrying out President Fillmore's sagacious orders to persuade Japan to open her doors to the nations.

Fillmore's fifty years of life had witnessed the complete transformation of the United States from a few thriving towns separated by interminable forests, with settlers' log cabins in isolated clearings, into a populous nation of 23,000,000, well knit together by commercial, ecclesiastical, and social ties, and enjoying in their beginnings all the important modern inventions save the later uses of electricity. The early era had fully passed away, and the country in its material character was far more kin with the end of the century than with its beginning. That is, a young man starting in life in 1900 would, if transported back to Fillmore's era, find himself immensely more at home than a similar young man of 1850 would, if carried back to the conditions of 1800.

The consciousness of all this meant an elasticity of spirit and a freshness of determination in the people of the mid-century, which is unique in history. There was a sense that all things were open to a good will. The days of the Federalist patricians and of the common people, who were scarcely more than peasants, had melted into a universal democracy. The rich were not too rich nor too distant in degree for an apprentice boy to aspire to the hand of an

heiress, for a factory girl to dream with good reasonableness of being a society queen. In the North the servant-class was small; the hired men and hired girls were the "help"; they were respected as citizens in an equal-right country, and in all but the most exclusive families they still, in 1850, gathered at the common table and knelt at family prayer. Of caste there was none, outside of slavery. Indeed, it was the Northern moral shiver at slavery which contributed to keep fresh so long the free and familiar relation between employer and employed. In the South there was a life among the planters of charming hospitality and companionship. But with their youth educated to an imperiousness over another caste, no matter how kindly, the stimulus and resourcefulness of pure democracy as it existed in the free States was necessarily lacking.

It was the day of young faith in reforms. When it became evident to a few of intense minds that a thing was rational and good, they had no precedent for not believing that the world would be convinced of it presently. Total abstinence from intoxicants was a reform of the hugest proportions at that time, and the State of Maine prohibited their sale by law. The apostles of Woman's Rights were preaching in strange bloomers the gospel of woman's equal privilege in voting, in employment, in initiative, and in generally doing a man's part. Others were urging the cult of a vegetable diet; the doctrine of a fellowship in labor and capital; the virtue of a community of wives; the superior advantages of many wives; the speedy coming of the Lord and the end of the world. Brook Farm, the Oneida Community, the Mormons, the Millerites, were each very real subjects for consideration at the period rounded up by Fillmore's

administration. The most marvellous of these extraordinary conceptions of life was that of the Mormons, who had dug up a new Bible on a New York farm, had been driven westward for their offensive ways, and lately had set up in Utah a new Jerusalem, with prophets and apostles, a weird religion, and a plurality of wives. Their chief, Brigham Young, was appointed by the President as governor of the new Territory.

With this intensely individual life of the people, and with their sight of the miraculous development of the country in so short a period, there was an exhiliration which not strangely produced a national egotism. It was a measureless faith in American invincibility against all conditions. No other people had ever begun to achieve what this one had. The common-school system had followed the settlers to the remotest frontier, and everywhere, except in the South, illiteracy was less than in any other nation by an immense degree. In pluck, enterprise, general enlightenment, and liberty, the United States was felt to be the example for the world and the hospitable home for the oppressed of every nation,—save the Chinese, who were already in their unassimilation an economic problem in California. This prodigious national satisfaction gave the impulse to the Union jubilee following the Compromise measures. The idea of such a Union being disrupted was unbearable. If slavery now could only be ignored and forbearance be exercised the danger would not return. It really seemed to many, in 1852, that the abolition turbulence had worn itself out. So President Fillmore told Congress in his message. "The agitation," said he, "which for a time threatened to disturb the fraternal relations that make us one peo-

ple, is fast subsiding"; and he congratulated the country upon the general acquiescence in the Compromise measures "in all parts of the Republic."

Nevertheless these measures were the doom of the Whig party. The elections of the mid-term gave the Democrats again control of the House. More and more the power slipped away. The Whigs had brought the new truce but the Democrats were getting the reward. The latent strength of the Whigs in the North had been due to their stand against the secessionists. Now that they had engineered a condition of armistice, the further need of them was not boldly clear. If a finality were really reached, its maintenance would be more natural in Democratic hands. In June, 1852, both the parties held their conventions. The platforms were nearly alike in all the points wherein the people took a vital interest,—that is, the things concerning slavery. Both condemned agitation, and both cheered for the Compromise measures, including by name the Fugitive Slave Law. Only, the Democrats' platform was solid as to the finality, while the Whigs left a loose plank as to "further legislation." This was enough of itself to defeat them after they had staked all on the Compromise.

The Whigs however trusted to win on their candidate. Again, for the third time, they brought forward a military hero, General Winfield Scott. Webster had made supreme sacrifice to get this nomination, and the loss of it broke his heart even unto death. Fillmore also desired it on his consistent Whig record, and nearly got it. But on the fifty-third ballot the soldier drew the prize. The President submitted gracefully to his defeat, but Webster went home to die.

The Democrats nominated Franklin Pierce, a mediocre man. But they had the positive platform, and their sincerity could be trusted. The Free Soil anti-slavery party also put forward an obviously sincere declaration as to the iniquity of the Compromise, a denial of the binding force of the Fugitive Slave Law, and a demand for the abolition of slavery in all the Territories. They nominated John P. Hale, and in the campaign their speeches were all that relieved it of apathy. Outside of their contention there was no great principle at stake. They were relieved of all the adventitious reinforcements which the Van Buren faction had brought them four years before, but they rallied more of the genuine abolition element, which was disgusted past forbearance with the surrender to the South.

The Whigs' magic was gone. With nothing to present but phrases over a finality of Union-saving, of which they themselves betrayed a distrust, with Clay dead and Webster in anger turned against them, their disintegration set in; their work was over. The election brought them an overwhelming defeat. General Scott received only 54 electoral votes against 254 for Pierce; only two of the free States went Whig. The party cohesion was so slight that after this defeat it fell utterly to pieces, and never again, as such, put forward another presidential candidate.

The passing of both Clay and Webster during this fateful campaign of 1852 made it memorable as a national climax, dramatic because in the fulness of time. Clay's death occurred just after the campaign opened, Webster died just before it ended. Presidents had come and gone for forty years while they two had been together in public life. The

plaguing ambition of each of them had been to be a president, and both died in embittered sorrow that they had failed. Yet each name is greater and means more to American history than that of any president during their period. Theirs was unassisted glory. It was the glory of personal distinction and of greatness of accomplishment. Their work had been to finish the arch of nationality of which Washington and Jefferson had laid the foundations. Without them it is not likely that the two American principles of centralization and of local independence could ever have been adjusted to a perfect balance; if they had not given their giant strength incessantly during those four most crucial decades for the cementing of the disuniting elements, it is difficult to see how the Republic could have avoided irretrievable disruption. Clay had worked chiefly as a constructive legislator, proceeding on the principle that as the first Union under the Constitution was at the cost of concessions on the part of each, so concessions must continue until the opinionated States could arrive at the habit of a common feeling. Webster, with profounder and more subtle mind, had appealed chiefly to the public at large, and he created increasingly, year by year, a popular sentiment that the United States were a Nation; that beneath the union of States which was for expediency, was a union of the people which was natural and everlasting.

Whatever their inconsistencies, these two men stand as the amalgamators of the Republic. While others fought for States and sections, these two towered as Americans. Clay said of himself, truthfully: "If any one desires to know the leading and paramount object of my public life, the preservation of this Union will furnish him the key." And in

Webster's reply to Hayne are the famous words which express the political motive of his career: "When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonoured fragments of a once glorious Union . . . but may I see . . . everywhere . . . that sentiment dear to every true American heart—*Liberty* and *Union*, now and forever, one and inseparable." When the shock of attempted disruption came, in 1861, the Union sentiment which resisted it was due to an incalculable degree to the work of these two men.

But after 1852 they could have done no more. They were too set to adjust themselves to the new issues which Seward and Sumner were announcing as having fully come. Nor could they have perceived any immortal and imperative prophecy in the novel, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which Harriet Beecher Stowe published that same year of 1852, and which in twelve months reached a sale of three hundred thousand copies. But this picture of the monstrous horror and infinite sadness of slavery did what the agitators could not do,—it set men and women to crying. When it was dramatised and performed on the Bowery, men and boys who had mobbed abolitionists wept like girls and thundered applause at the sentiments of human freedom. But those whose eyes were open to the newer duty perceived at once what a gospel this novel was bringing. The poet Whittier thanked God for the Fugitive Slave Law because it had given the world "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; and Rufus Choate is said to have remarked: "This book will make two millions of abolitionists." It was read attentively at the South, and as it was translated into all the European languages, the Southern editors ex-

plained that it was regarded abroad as an allegory of monarchical tyranny, and thus they saved their shame. In America it was really the first chapter of the vast popular movement which was to exterminate slavery from the Western hemisphere.

The closing of 1852, with the passing of Fillmore from the presidency, thus marks with singular exactness the closing of a definite national epoch and the dawn of another of distinct character. There were to be several years of apparent lull before the volcano opened. But during the deceptive truce in legislative struggle, the new sentiment of humanity was growing determined.

On the Fourth of March, 1853, President Fillmore gave up his office to President-elect Pierce. He retired to his home in Buffalo, where he spent the next nineteen years, save when abroad. In 1856, while in Europe, he was nominated for the presidency by the American party, and the nomination was accepted by the remnant of the Whig wreck. The party polled 874,534 votes; but the Democrats had 1,838,-169, and the new Republican party cast 1,341,204 votes. Fillmore and his old associates were hopelessly out of relation to the issues which had so suddenly started up with new aspect from the final subsidence where he had consigned them four years before. He was a melancholy witness of the bloody finale of the Compromise; and he also lived to see the splendour of the reunited Republic which he loved. He died in Buffalo, on March 8, 1874, and in the honour of old age he was not condemned too severely for his official approval of the Fugitive Slave Law, for his patriotism had never been questioned, and in the working out of Providence, that mistaken and monstrous measure had only hastened the good.

Fillmore was no more to be unforgiven than Clay and Webster, his leaders and his fathers in the faith. He was a good, sound-hearted, average public man. He had before him the forbidden example of Tyler, renegade to his party. The broad current of Whig Compromise, which appeared so mighty and benignant, could have been resisted sanely only by a very great man. Lincoln might have done it thus wisely, if that had been his day; but it was not possible for Fillmore.

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